The New REPUBLIC

Published Weekly

Wednesday August 19, 1931

Conservatism Hits Bottom

by CHARLES A. BEARD

Bankers as Revolutionaries - *H. N. Brailsford*

Socialists as Conservatives - *Editorial*

Dreiser in the Films - *Matthew Josephson*

Who is Sylvia? - *Stark Young*

Forbes Library
Northampton, Mass.

FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

FIVE DOLLARS A YEAR

VOL. LXVIII. NO. 872

...ed as Second Class matter November 6, 1916 at the Post Office at New York, N.Y. under the act of March 3, 1879

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MESSRS. HARPER & BROTHERS HAVE THE HONOR TO ANNOUNCE THE PUBLICATION ON AUGUST SEVENTEENTH OF THE FIFTH HARPER PRIZE NOVEL

"BROTHERS IN THE WEST"

BY ROBERT RAYNOLDS

THE JUDGES: CARL VAN DOREN, ELLEN GLASGOW, BLISS PERRY. PREVIOUS WINNERS: 1923—THE ABLE MCLAUGHLINS, BY MARGARET WILSON. 1925—THE PERENNIAL BACHELOR, BY ANNE PARRISH. 1927—THE GRANDMOTHERS, BY GLENWAY WESCOTT. 1929—THE DARK JOURNEY, BY JULIAN GREEN.

LET US HELP YOU

CANCER in its early stages is usually curable when properly treated. If you have the slightest suspicion that you have cancer, consult a physician at once. The odds are against your having cancer, but why take a chance? Why wait until *it may be too late?*

Follow the advice of your own doctor, or of your local Cancer Committee.

FOR FREE INFORMATION WRITE, CALL OR TELEPHONE TO

The New York City Cancer Committee

34 East 75th Street · RHinelander 4-0435

If not a resident of New York City—write to the

American Society for the Control of Cancer

New York, N. Y.

The New York World-Telegram

says of

PROGRESS

in the

SOVIET UNION

Past—Present—Future

A Book of Graphic Charts

Compiled by

ALBERT A. JOHNSON

"These charts compiled by Mr. Johnson constitute the best graphic presentation of the social and economic progress of Russia available in the English language. In addition to the specific indication of Russian achievements, a comparison is made between the reality and the mark set for the Five Year Plan through the year 1930. A similar series of charts prepared some time back sold for no less than $65. The distribution of the present set by The New Republic for $6 is a contribution to public education."

TO NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21st STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

FOR THE ATTACHED $6.00 SEND ME "PROGRESS IN THE SOVIET UNION: A BOOK OF CHARTS" COMPILED BY ALBERT A. JOHNSON.

NAME.....

STREET.....

CITY.....

STATE.....

8-5-31

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXVIII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1931 NUMBER 872

Contents

The Week 1

Editorials

Socialists as Conservatives 4
Prices—and Prices 5
A Russian Visits the U. S. A. 6

General Articles

Conservatism Hits Bottom ..... Charles A. Beard 7
Unconsuming Fire (verse) ..... Helen Cornelius 11
Bankers as Revolutionaries ..... H. N. Brailsford 12
Graft in Business ..... John T. Flynn 14
An Educational Tragi-Comedy ..... W. B. Curry 17
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 19
Who Is Sylvia? ..... Stark Young 20
Dreiser, Reluctant, in the Films ..... Matthew Josephson 22

Correspondence 22

Reviews of Books

Taste and Dr. Johnson ..... Allen Tate 23
New Russian Gods ..... Nathan Asch 24
And Now Southern Industrialism ..... Winchell Taylor 25
The Scientist and His Soul ..... Benjamin Ginzburg 26
Book Notes 27

The Week

GERMANY'S experience in pulling herself out of financial collapse has already demonstrated that temporary and partial measures are not enough. The reopening of the banks, to be sure, went smoothly; the population had gained sufficient confidence so that no runs occurred. But in order to safeguard the exchange value of the mark, it was necessary to canalize all exchange transactions through the Reichsbank, which was given the power to decide what payments might be made across the country's borders. This was necessary in order to make sure, not only that there should be no "flight of capital," but that the payments going out should not exceed those coming in. It was essentially the same as Russia's control of exchange, and, like that, it inevitably brought with it government power over exports and imports. But immediately vigorous protests arose from both domestic and foreign sources. Factories which could not get materials threatened retaliation. Ordinary commercial life could not continue under such restrictions. In order to maintain the control, Germany would have had to imitate Russia further by building up a self-contained economy and exercising positive authority over imports and exports in accordance with the production plan. The restrictions were therefore relaxed as to bona-fide imports and exports. Exchange transactions are scrutinized only to prevent transfers of capital to foreign countries. This will suffice, only if Germany, in order to pay her debts, can maintain an export surplus, or can keep on borrowing indefinitely to meet the deficit in her international payments. Thus the fundamental question reappears concerning markets for German exports.

MEANWHILE an interesting conflict has come to the surface between the desire to offer further help to Germany and the desire to aid American farmers. It was suggested that the Federal Farm Board sell to Germany on easy credit terms a large part of its accumulated surpluses of wheat and cotton. What could be neater? The Germans would acquire necessary raw materials without having to pay cash for them while the Farm Board would get rid of a large part of its holdings and liquidate some of its losses. But others who had their eyes on the German market immediately objected. Every bale of cotton or bushel of wheat which Germany might buy from the Farm Board would prevent her from buying a bale of cotton or a bushel of wheat somewhere else. If Germany could be financed to buy governmentally held crops, why could she not be financed to buy crops held by coöperatives, exporters or farmers? As long as there is a surplus, the Farm Board cannot sell its wheat and cotton anywhere or on any terms without further depressing current prices. And, to emphasize the difficulty, wheat sinks further to the lowest prices on record, while a forecast of a large cotton crop drives the price of cotton to a point not seen in thirty years. So long as overproduction—or underconsumption—cannot be prevented, the only way to help the farmers is to subsidize them in raising things which might as well be used for an election bonfire.

THE Wickersham Commission furnished much of the past week's domestic news. Three of its special reports were made public at the White

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

House, those dealing with illegal treatment of aliens, the third degree and unfairness in prosecutions; and it was definitely learned that the Commission's study of the Mooney-Billings case has been suppressed. Of the three new documents, the report on the third degree, (the work of Zechariah Chafee, Jr., Walter H. Pollak and Carl S. Stern), received the greatest public attention. It is a sickening story; it shows by testimony which cannot be impeached that horrible cruelty is practised by police against prisoners, in all parts of the United States, and in cities of all sizes. This cruelty is exercised mainly, though not entirely, for the purpose of extorting confessions and these confessions are frequently used in court to influence the minds of judge and jury. Prisoners are beaten with clubs or with rubber hose (a favorite method, for it leaves no marks); they are burned with lighted cigars; they are knocked unconscious with a blow from the rear, revived, and knocked unconscious again; in Chicago, they have been hung upside down and had tear gas inflicted upon them. They are subjected to prolonged questioning, during which they are forced to go without food, water or sleep. (Both the Wickersham Commissioners and the police for some inexplicable reason regard this as less cruel treatment than being beaten.) They are held incommunicado for days or even weeks, not being permitted to get into touch with their families or consult attorneys.

ALL this is, of course, a familiar story; it has all been told before, though not with the authority of the Wickersham Commission's report. The police in various cities immediately denied that the indictment applied to them, and this, also, was to be expected. The police always deny the third degree, just as they always continue to practise it. The Wickersham Commission has no particular remedy to suggest, beyond prompt arraignment before a magistrate of every individual arrested; it points out that additional laws would be of no use because the whole practice is already illegal. Chief emphasis is laid upon the creation of a better morale among the police: Boston, for example, is said to be almost wholly free from torture of prisoners, because a tradition against brutality has been built up over many years. In this matter, as in other aspects of our police and judicial system, we have much to learn from the example of Great Britain. There, as the Wickersham Commission points out, brutality toward prisoners is all but unknown; a parliamentary investigation was recently caused by police treatment of a young woman when that treatment was so mild that it would not even have been listed as an example of the third degree in the present report. Admittedly, our police have a difficult problem with which to deal; but the savagery of their methods is out of all proportion to its seriousness, even assuming that such methods are effective, a theory universally repudiated by criminologists.

THERE was for some time doubt whether the Wickersham Commission would officially accept and make public its own report on the treatment of aliens by the Department of Labor; and a perusal of its contents shows why pressure was brought to bear to prevent publication. It is a terrific indictment of the whole system of handling aliens suspected of being illegally in the United States. Two of the eleven Wickersham Commissioners refused to sign the report, and it was published to the accompaniment of loud howls of rage and denial from Secretary Doak, who seized what some people would consider an inauspicious moment to ask for even more autocratic powers for the Department, which is now throwing aliens out of the United States at the rate of 20,000 a year. The report, prepared with great care and in the main the work of Reuben Oppenheimer, a Baltimore attorney, shows that deportation methods are often "unconstitutional, tyrannical and oppressive." It tells how immigration officials, who are frequently men of low character appointed through political pressure, use secret star-chamber proceedings to deport, sometimes in violation of the law, individuals whose political and economic views are antipathetic to the "ragged individualism" of the Hoover administration. "Confessions" are often obtained by the third-degree methods which are described in another current Wickersham report. Mass raids are conducted, in which American citizens are frequently seized and forced to prove that they are not aliens subject to deportation, in defiance of the principle that the burden of proof is on the prosecution. The report describes the cases, already known to our readers, where alien radicals are ordered sent back to the country of their origin even when this means almost certain death at the hands of political enemies. The Commission approves the suggestion that cases involving deportation of aliens should be subject to review by a genuine court, in accordance with legal principles. The adoption of this suggestion should be the very minimum needed in doing away with the present appalling exhibition of governmental Ku Kluxery.

AS HAD been predicted, the Wickersham Commission has refused to make public the elaborate report on the Mooney-Billings case prepared under its direction by a special committee of eminent attorneys. In the foreword to its report on lawlessness in law enforcement it defends this position in a passage which is more ingenious than credible. Without admitting that it caused a report on the case to be made, the Commission says that "months ago" it decided it could not "investigate individual cases with a view to making recommendations as to their disposition, particularly in state courts, for the reason, among other, that the commission has no power to examine witnesses or redetermine facts." The Commission recalls that in another special report, that on criminal procedure, it deplored the California law which made it impossible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to grant a new trial on discovering evidence of perjury. It describes the informal hearing on the case conducted a few months ago by the California Supreme Court and remarks that "obviously, this commission could not undertake to review that action." Finally, it says that a new application for a pardon is before the Governor of California and that the Commissioners feel it is improper for them to discuss the case while this is pending.

THESE are all pretty words with which to cover up an urgent fact: the fact that the Commission was afraid of the Mooney case and for political reasons decided to suppress the report which it had previously ordered made. No one has suggested that this case should be studied "with a view to making recommendations as to its disposition;" it has only been proposed that a Commission created to consider legal lawlessness ought to take cognizance of one of the two outstanding examples of such lawlessness in the United States in the past ten years. As for the review of the case by the California supreme court, which was as outrageous a mockery of justice as this country has ever witnessed, why shouldn't the Wickershm Commission have told the truth about it? Did its instructions tell it to investigate petty offenders against justice and let the big ones alone? In the argument that the Commission should keep hands off while Governor Rolph is considering a new pardon appeal, we have a sudden descent from the principles to expediency which must leave the public feeling it has been taken for a ride—on a roller coaster. The Governor is not a court, and consideration of a pardon application is not a trial. Applications for a pardon have been pending before his various predecessors in office for a great part of the fifteen years that Mooney and Billings have been in prison. Seemingly these unhappy victims are to choose between trying to get out of jail and meekly remaining there with the faint chance that some future Wickersham Commission will tell them, if they make no application for pardon, that their incarceration is just too bad. Finally, if there are all these weighty reasons for not investigating the Mooney-Billings case, why did the Commissioners order it investigated and cause an elaborate report to be prepared, which they have now pigeon-holed? It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that their present action is one of sheer political expediency and moral cowardice of a sort which will go with them to their graves.

IT IS reported that some of the most important coal operators have at last come round to the conclusion that there is no salvation for the bituminous industry save federal regulation, and that those in the Pittsburgh district have submitted to the President a proposal of this character. The administration had invited the operators to meet with representatives of the United Mine Workers in order to consider the desperate labor situation. But it is said that the operators see no use in conferring with the miners, since the low wages and unemployment arise from the disorganization of the industry. It is true that reconstruction of the industry as a whole must preceed the attainment of decent labor conditions. But the operators in question, many of whom have been bitterly anti-union, may be employing their new argument as an excuse for not conferring with labor. We shall await with interest any evidence that their reported stand is serious and genuine. In the meantime we may observe that here, as in the railroads and dozens of other cases, business men are forced to turn to government for help, in spite of their frequently asserted principle that government and business should be kept separate. And we are convinced that mere regulation is a left-handed way of approaching the difficulty. While it may be better than competitive chaos, it will not in the end prove satisfactory. What we need is unified management directed to the attainment of social ends, and that probably cannot be achieved without more drastic measures.

CHICAGO'S South Side was turned into a battlefield recently when 5,000 Negro rioters clashed with the police over the eviction of a woman tenant for non-payment of rent. When the hostilities were over, three rioters were found dead and many more seriously wounded, among them, three policemen. This bloody encounter, like many other reported episodes of violence which make up one of the dark chapters of depression, shows how inflammable the mental state of the impoverished masses is growing to be in various industrial centers. Chicago officials were quick to ascribe the rioting to Communist agitation in the Black Belt. But who can deny that thousands of Negroes, more severely hit by the depression than whites, have suffered from hunger for many months? And in this condition is not the sight of a starving woman being thrown into the street enough to incite mob passion? The system, of course, sets the stage perfectly for Communist demonstrations. This the city government plainly admitted when it made an emergency ruling, on the morning after the battle, that all service upon eviction warrants was temporarily to be withheld. But at this revolutionary measure all respectable property-owners will throw up their hands in horror. Is not the landlord to have a fair rental return upon his investment? What is this age of "frozen" capitalism coming to, with moratoriums cropping up in the most unexpected places? Events such as those in Chicago—where many thousands marched in the funeral procession for the dead rioters on August 8—should give master minds, such as Messrs. Hoover, Barnes and Strawn, food for thought. These incidents forecast for the coming winter developments far more "appalling and deplorable" than anything which the gentlemen of Washington say they fear from federal unemployment insurance.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BEAUTIFUL movie actresses, having luxurious figures when photographed in bathing suits, astride dashing aquaplanes, have long been wont to give testimonials as to the virtues of such things as Kellogg's Bran which, inducing perfect elimination, breeds impeccable figures. Such self-sacrificing candor, such realism in the effort to educate the public has of course seemed shockingly inconsistent with the morals of a nation which bars out important works of literature like James Joyce's "Ulysses." But how much more unhappy we are made to feel on learning that the golden-eyed movie star may never even have tasted the particular "roughage" which she has ogled and coaxed millions of us into eating. Nine times out of ten, as the Federal Trade Commission at Washington has at last found out, such forthright testimony is paid for and false. The demons of advertising, in carrying on their eternal fight for anti-fat, anti-hair, anti-breath and anti-shock remedies have left us completely in the dark as to the motives of their celebrated or notorious witnesses. The Federal Trade Commission proposes to force advertisers to state that the testimonials they have secured "have been paid for" when such is the case; or in other words, to justify the public's suspicion that the flushed, happy look on the published faces of Joan Crawford, "Babe" Ruth or Mrs. Vanderbilt is not caused by the laxative, the mud-pack or the cellophane-wrapped cigarette, but by the absorption of one grand—or at least a few hundred bones.

Socialists as Conservatives

IT IS a dramatic event when followers of Karl Marx turn out to be the chief bulwark against European revolution. Yet this is the plain meaning of the recent Prussian referendum. In Prussia the Socialists have long held political power. What Prussia does goes a long way toward determining the policy of the German republic. The Socialists have even permitted a dictatorship in order to preserve the Weimar Constitution and adjust Germany's difficulties with the other capitalistic nations. In the recent referendum, the extreme nationalists on the Right joined with the Communists on the Left in an effort to dissolve the Prussian diet. If successful in the new elections, they would have ousted the Socialist premier, turned away from the policy of conciliation and created a danger of war. Though a dictatorship of Fascist character would probably have followed, the Communists expected to profit by the ensuing confusion and eventually establish their leadership.

One could better understand the German Socialists' logic if what they were protecting were really a socialist state. But of course it is not; Germany has every essential characteristic of a capitalist economy, modified only in detail from the pattern as we know it in the United States. The German Socialists long before the War became in effect a liberal party of reform, postponing to some indefinite and probably mythical future any drastic reorganization of the economic system. Though they have never held a clear majority in the country as a whole, it is doubtful if they would have used such power to establish socialism. They were mentally unprepared to do so. They would much rather try to make capitalism work for the immediate advantage of the wage-earner than take the risks inherent in upsetting established institutions. The "revolution" has, in their philosophy, become something which is bound inevitably to occur at some predetermined moment, and everything which the Socialists may do in the meantime from considerations of expediency fits into the necessary progress of predestination. Thus the revolution is shoved off into "Never-Never Land."

The British Socialists, like the German, have been in office, but never have been supported by a majority. Again their leaders are reformist rather than revolutionary in spirit; they have been far more concerned with improving international relations and recovering prosperity than they have been with any drastic change in the profit system as it exists in Great Britain. Only the left wing of the party has any very definite ideas about bringing socialism into being. Here, too, those who are called Socialists have been devoting their best energies to staving off the disaster which European capitalism seems bent on bringing to itself. A similar account could be given of Socialist parties in most other countries, especially as they approximate power. Their activity has been shown in such things as unemployment insurance, housing, labor legislation, and perhaps the public ownership of a few utilities, not in a general socialization of industry and a substitute for the price and profit system. Even their achievements are minimized or sacrificed as far as it is necessary to do so in order to make adjustments to the going economy.

Communist revolutionaries, of course, attack the Socialists as misleaders of the proletariat, just as they attack the officials of the trade-union movements, most of which are similarly conservative. But both Socialist and trade-union bodies act in a way which is to be expected, under the circumstances, and their leadership is conditioned by a process of social survival. Socialist parties, like trade unions, have achieved their strength under a liberal-democratic capitalist regime. In order to retain a large following, they are bound to serve the immediate interests of labor under this regime. This means inevitably a bargaining and compromising process, an edging along into a little better situation, rather than making a sudden and uncomfortable change. It means improving, so far as possible, the operation of the existing system itself, since the operation of this system affects the welfare of the workers as well as that of the owners. And, when disaster is feared, it means protecting the system against anyone who wants to overturn it. Unions and labor parties which evince

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this attitude are bound to hold the upper hand over their more radical rivals unless disaster and chaos actually arrive, unless capitalism commits suicide, in spite of all efforts to stay its hand.

We need not infer from this phenomenon that the only possibility of change in capitalism is through a collapse which would favor a Communist revolution. Smaller changes, if occuring in a constant direction, may eventually add up to a major change. And capitalism changes itself as it goes along. But we can infer that little significant change is to be expected by traditional political means alone, and by dealing in the stock-in-trade of Socialist ideas. If anything real is to happen to the behavior of business itself, it must be through a technique and a group of ideas that are appropriate to the reorganization of the world of production and exchange. Such ideas may, of course, be utilized by political powers as well as by industrialists or unions. But we must know more or less precisely how economic institutions are to be operated under a better plan, and we must have the technique so to operate them, or we shall never approach the goal. This is the importance of the application to broader realms of the ideas of planning, already worked out on a smaller scale by management engineers. Norman Thomas said in our pages last week that capitalism will not plan. Neither will socialism, judging by its record so far. But the conception of central planning is such a logical development from the growth of machine civilization that any group which understands and advocates it is bound to be in the main line of social evolution.

Prices—and Prices

THE MACMILLAN Report on Finance and Industry, which H. N. Brailsford describes on page 12 of this issue of The New Republic, centers mainly about one diagnosis of the world depression, and one remedy for it. The general fall of prices has disturbed economic relationships all along the line; the low price level which we have now reached means such a subsidy to those whose returns are fixed in terms of money (bondholders, nations collecting war debts, pensioners and the like) that industry cannot find sufficient profit to encourage its activities without drastically reducing salaries and wages. The price level must therefore be increased to a point where this necessity disappears, and at this point it must in the future be stabilized.

This sounds like the cruder variants of stable-money theory, but as a matter of fact the Macmillan Report implies more than this. The fall of prices itself was not due to mistaken currency and credit policy on the part of the banks; it was due to intractable non-monetary factors like the War settlement, tariffs, changes in technique such as the substitution of oil for coal, etc. The Committee is divided as to whether banking policy could have prevented the maladjustments caused by these factors. On this account we are justified in inquiring whether changes in banking practice can now raise the price level or stabilize it, and whether the emphasis of the Committee on this phase of the matter is really helpful.

In the addendum signed by John Maynard Keynes and five other members it is pointed out that the principal difficulty today is not any lack of available credit, but the reluctance of acceptable borrowers to make use of it. Low bank rates and easy credit policy are, therefore, no automatic remedy. As for England, they recommend restrictions of imports and aids to exports, plus state-aided projects which would employ capital, such as reëquipment of industry, rebuilding, electrification, etc. Here, as in other addenda, state planning is emphasized. These addenda appear to us more enlightening than the main report.

The depression which has led to the low prices, which in turn aggravate the depression, was not due to any absolute or universal lack of purchasing power. It arose from the lack of any method for directing purchasing power into the hands of those who could use it to buy all the goods being produced, and probably also to an overproduction of certain types of goods in relation to any possible demand, no matter how well purchasing power was distributed. Credit, extended freely to consuming individuals and consuming nations during the period of prosperity, as a means of meeting the lack of properly distributed purchasing power, did not prove to be self-liquidating, and in the end added to the confusion. Likewise, credit freely extended to producers without regard to the possible future market for their products was not ultimately helpful. Hence the present lack of acceptable borrowers.

We cannot therefore regard the fall of the price level as an unmitigated evil, or as a collapse from any level which could be regarded as normal and healthy. If the fall of prices has brought maladjustment of obligations and incomes as between debtor and creditor, the formerly existing level concealed similar maladjustments as between farmer and manufacturer, profiteer and wage-earner, speculator and producer. Jacking up all prices would do no more permanent good than has letting them all down. In this country, for instance, it is quite possible that the reduction of profit margins which is now taking place through the reduction in prices of manufactured articles is an essential preliminary to future prosperity. Perhaps only in this way can the purchasing power of wage-earners and salary-earners be sufficiently increased to absorb their customary share of the national product. What we really need is control of special classes of prices and incomes. The prices of the more important crops and many raw materials ought now to be raised. But the prices of most manufactured articles ought to be held to at least as low a point as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that at which they are. The real trouble with industry and employment is not so much small profit margins caused by low prices, as lack of volume in sales. It might be better to cancel international debts and scale down the return of bondholders, than to try to create a boom in prices, if their boom would merely have the effect of inflating industrial profits again without affecting agriculture or remedying any other deep-seated difficulty.

The prospect of stabilizing a hit-or-miss economy through such a crude measure as credit dumped into it or pulled out of it by the banks, with the object of affecting such a broad abstraction as *the* price level, is not bright. We need a much more detailed and engineered type of control, one which will fit the parts of our machine together properly, and continuously coördinate their action.

A Russian Visits the U. S. A.

IT SEEMS a special bit of irony that Boris Pilnyak should recently have been visiting the United States and expressing his views about us freely. For this Russian novelist presents himself more or less in the role of an intellectual ambassador from a new and rapidly changing civilization to an old one, which in some ways is becoming painfully aware of its own decrepitude. By a strange reversal of historical roles, it is the Russian tourist who leaves a land of "hope and progress" to view in America a land of "reaction and misery." Appropriately enough, the author of "The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea" fits into the traditional notion of the young American type: he is tall and blond, well tailored, wears tortoise-shell spectacles and likes to take long tours by motorcar. His impressions of our country, as related in an interview at his departure, were as pungent and brutally candid as his writing.

He saw strange contrasts, splendid and terrible things. At a literary banquet tendered him upon his arrival he found his American hosts drinking liquor copiously, although the country had long ago been declared bone-dry. He developed a spontaneous liking for our widely distributed grain alcohol, which looks like vodka. (At the same function in his honor he saw the two most famous American novelists, Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser engage in an altercation which included one brisk slap in the face.) He saw police everywhere in our great cities preserving order upon the streets and skillfully directing our groaning traffic; but he saw also, in our tabloids, the pictures of gangsters who shot each other down with impunity, sometimes slaying or wounding children in the vicinity. Gangster killing, he remarked, was "perfectly legitimate in this country, a feature of American life" like prohibition drinking. ("Let's think we're sitting here and not drinking," lifting his glass and smiling sardonically.) He visited Hollywood, wonder-city, home of the most modern of the arts, but vouchsafed that art "never spent a night in Hollywood." Asked to collaborate in the preparation of a motion picture upon a Russian subject, he advised against the use of a certain incident which was impossible in Russia today, but was told that it made "good movie." He asked himself, "So why do they need me?" as he pocketed a generous fee for useless services and drove off upon a tour of the country in a Ford. Passing the Grand Canyon he judged it instantly to be a "fake." The middle-sized towns he stopped at he dubbed "provincial city-villages." In New York, however, he found a city of the "twenty-first century." He saw our depression, also, and remarked that Russia could dispense with this, as with our cooking. He saw everywhere a great industrial machinery, of marvelous technical perfection, which his own countrymen are straining to duplicate; but this machinery worked at half-pressure, as if seized with deadly decay, whereas in Russia, machinery labors and clanks full blast. So what was the use of the marvelous American machinery? Or the vast, rich farm area which glutted the country with so much food that from seven to ten million Americans faced hunger? In Russia, at least people did not go hungry because there was too much food around the place.

On the whole, Pilnyak thought, "America has taken the most vital and flashy things from European culture and developed them to the last possible limits" But because America's activities seemed bewildered, apathetic, decadent, whereas Russia was working with might and main to carry out a great rational plan for social betterment, he proposed merrily to transport to his own energized land "the beautiful women, the healthy men"—for many of whom there was no work here—and above all "the technical improvements," which, at a time like this, seem to go to waste. No doubt our great captains of industry, our Fourth of July orators and all the rest who believe with Mr. Hoover that civilization has reached with us its absolute climax will find it an odd sensation to be pitied by a Russian. But it is equally certain that the experience is good for them.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1931, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT. DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK ALVIN JOHNSON
E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES
R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Conservatism Hits Bottom

THOSE who are engaged in scanning the political horizon will readily recall the excitement and amusement raised by the inquiry which the Nye Committee on Campaign Expenditures made into the frantic attempts to defeat Senator Norris in Nebraska in the summer of 1930. The project for befuddling the voters by placing a second Norris, the grocer of Broken Bow, on the ticket was fully exploited in the press. They will recall also how the inquiry proceeded through last winter, revealing extraordinary operations on the part of gentlemen in charge of the Republican National Committee. In the usual fragmentary form, thrilling tales of these escapades were told in the newspapers. Then, as always happens, the uproar died away and the chapter of incidents was relegated to the attic of forgotten political rubbish.

In themselves the incidents may be trivial, but as illustrations of political science they are of permanent importance. They indicate forms of mentality, standards of honor, concepts of party responsibility, and types of political performance that must be understood by those who wish to fathom "the great game of politics," as Frank Kent calls it. Something permanent should therefore be entered upon the record, and this is now made possible by the official publication of the testimony before the Nye Committee, in three volumes.

In Part Two of the testimony, Mr. "Grocer" George W. Norris, who was employed by political tricksters in the comedy of Broken Bow, reveals himself in a manner that makes him a likely candidate for a place in Mr. Mencken's gallery of American thinkers.

Early in the inquiry Senator Nye asked Grocer Norris how he happened to imagine himself in the toga of Daniel Webster. Had the Grocer ever attended a state convention of the Republican party? No. Had he ever served in an official capacity for the Republican party? No. Had he been precinct committeeman? No. Had he ever had any contact with the machinery of the Republican party? "Not active." Evidently Grocer Norris was no mere party hack seeking entrance to the Senate by the route of petty service.

Therefore, Senator Nye took higher ground. He sought to disclose the grand principles of public policy which induced the Grocer to brave the ardors of a campaign; and the task was not difficult. It appeared on the record that Grocer Norris was opposed to the position taken by Senator Norris with respect to the elevation of Charles E. Hughes to the Supreme Bench. Here was something for gentlemen to discuss, and the discussion took the following form:

> The Chairman. Did you disagree with the position that Senator Norris took . . . ?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. I did.
>
> The Chairman. What did you know about the nomination of Mr. Hughes?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. Nothing but what I read in the paper, is all.
>
> The Chairman. Why did you feel that Mr. Hughes ought to have been confirmed?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. Well, he has always been active in politics, and he has always been putting in his time that way, and so he was entitled to it if anybody was.
>
> The Chairman. Then you think one of the qualifications for a Justice of the Supreme Court is that he be a good live politician?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. Well, he has studied them all his life. He should be qualified.

Besides being opposed to Senator Norris on account of his failure to support Mr. Hughes, Grocer Norris dissented from the Senator's power policy, as revealed by this colloquy:

> The Chairman. What was your attitude with relation to the power question in general?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. Well, I have always been more or less for the power companies—or not exactly for them; I have been against municipal ownership; that is, not to show a profit.
>
> The Chairman. You have been against municipal ownership as a general thing, have you?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. With results to show a profit; yes, sir. . . .
>
> The Chairman. You would not want the government then to build dams and develop power in those dams and sell the power?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. Not like it did to Muscle Shoals; no, sir.
>
> The Chairman. What did they do to Muscle Shoals?
>
> Mr. [Grocer] Norris. To my knowledge they spent $150,000,000; and have eight big dynamos working there or built there, and one of them working.

From this it is clear that Grocer Norris had informed himself respecting the great issues on which Nebraska respectability was intending to concentrate, in its effort to oust Senator Norris, and that he was prepared to speak with assurance and precision. But in the end the Grocer decided not to speak vociferously. After mailing his application preliminary to candidacy, he gave up his job in the store, left Broken Bow, stopped with his brother in North Platte long enough to get some cash on a Liberty Bond supplied by his secret backers, and slipped over into Estes Park, Colorado. He issued, it is true, a statement of his views, a kind of proclamation to the Grand Army of Republicans,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prepared by his engineers, but he failed to rush into the forum to rally the people behind his banner of progress and prosperity.

Senator Nye was much puzzled by the action of this candidate in announcing his ambition and then secretly leaving the state. Conducting a campaign from another state was an unusual stroke of genius. So Chairman Nye asked Grocer Norris whether this brilliant idea had come to him suddenly, and the Grocer answered: "Well, not in one day. It was at least three or four, I think." After all, in spite of his pretensions in statecraft, he claimed no quick flashes of illumination. He was not a genius, but it occurred to him in his deep meditations that he did not like Senator Norris' views on Charles E. Hughes, the august Supreme Court of the United States, and the power question, and that he would demand the seat of the Senator for himself, incidentally, as he swore in another relation, because the job paid more than that of railroad commissioner which he had once thought of seeking. Had anyone suggested the Senate to him? No. Had anyone helped him finance his campaign? No. The whole business grew out of his own inspiration, with, perhaps, the assistance of his wife who, it appears, could tell the difference between the income of a grocer, a railroad commissioner, and a United States Senator. So the Grocer of Broken Bow set out in the great white way that led to the Capitol in Washington.

This seemed very strange to the Select Committee of the Senate, but for a long time it was baffled in its efforts to explain the plot, though it early suspected the existence of a villain in the melodrama. For some reason it imagined that a Republican politician, Victor Seymour, attorney at law, in Lincoln, might throw light on the scene and, placing him under oath, it asked him many questions. What was his business? He was an attorney, not in general practice, but representing some Eastern trust companies. Had he had any contact with the pending senatorial campaign in Nebraska? "None whatever. No personal contact—no connection." Had he known Grocer Norris of Broken Bow or anything about his entry into the race for the Senate? To this Mr. Seymour replied, with due respect to his oath: "Never saw him; never heard of it until I saw it in the paper." Pressing the point, Chairman Nye asked flatly: "You had no part then, in view of what you have said, in encouraging the candidacy of George W. Norris, of Broken Bow?" Mr. Seymour: "Not a bit." He simply knew nothing whatever about it, except from gossip on the streets. Virtue could not be more impeccable. Mr. Seymour was an attorney, busy representing certain Eastern trust companies, and had taken no part in the senatorial squabble. The night thickens.

Persisting in its quest, the Senate Committee called upon Mr. Walter W. Head, chairman of the board of the Omaha National Bank, chairman of the board of the Nebraska Power Company, president of the Foreman State-National Bank of Chicago, director in the New York Life Insurance Company, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, and "a number of other prominent corporations." He also appeared in the record as president of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, chairman of the Finance Committee of the National Y.M.C.A., and an officer or director of several other "character-building, religious, charitable and philanthropic organizations." Now Mr. Head was a gentleman and expressed his view simply and without guile. In the presence of the Senate Committee, he censured "business men and officers of corporations for the lack of interest they take in political campaigns and candidates for political offices." He expressed the opinion that "if there were more business men prominently identified with large corporations with a sincere desire to really assist the citizens of the city and the state in which they live to help select and elect proper candidates to office, it would make unnecessary some of the things that have taken place during the year 1930." Standing on the broad platform of civic interest Mr. Head had tried to get the Honorable George W. Norris out of the United States Senate. That was his right as an American citizen. He sought to induce the Honorable Samuel R. McKelvie, of President Hoover's Farm Board, to make the race and undertook to finance a survey to discover whether Mr. McKelvie could jump the hurdle. Duly unlimbered, Mr. Head transmitted the money to a Mr. Smith, who in turn bought drafts on New York and Chicago banks and sent them to a Lincoln lawyer who delivered them to Victor Seymour (the same Victor who knew nothing about the senatorial campaign), who on his part deposited them under his name in a Lincoln bank, and checked on the account to pay his bills. The imputation that this was "power trust" money, Mr. Head rejected indignantly. "During the year 1930," he said to the Senate Committee, "I will have contributed $3,500 to my church, the Presbyterian Church and its auxiliary organizations. It is just as logical to say that this represented a power-trust contribution made for the purpose of spreading propaganda through the church pulpits. The suggestions, of course, are all perfectly ridiculous." Mr. Head was rich, to be sure, and connected with great private enterprises, but he thought that such affiliations did not interfere with his thinking as an American citizen. It was in the latter capacity that he opposed Senator Norris and financed a preliminary campaign to discover the best way to retire the Senator from his place in the Capitol. It was all open and above board and Mr. Head quite honorably made a clean breast of it. But inadvertently, perhaps, he had thrown light on Mr. Victor Seymour, the attorney. And the circle of light was enlarged by other testimony.

Now in the course of his operations as represen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tative of certain Eastern trust companies and otherwise, Mr. Seymour employed as his secretary-stenographer, Miss Esther Marie Alton, of Lincoln. She testified that she thought Mr. Seymour's office was "a financial affair," but added after some questioning that quite a number of politicians connected with the ambitions of the budding statesman of Broken Bow, Grocer Norris, had been in and out of the office. Then in a single shot she exploded the works. Mr. Seymour had sworn that he knew nothing about the candidacy of the Grocer until he saw it in the paper, and Mr. Grocer Norris had sworn that it was all his inspiration and that he had written his own announcement on his own little typewriter, without any help from the outside. But Miss Alton testified that several days before the Grocer's proclamation to the public was issued she copied that historic document from a paper in the handwriting of Mr. Seymour (with which she was familiar). That was certainly curious. Mr. Seymour knew nothing about Grocer Norris' ambitions until the news came out in the press. Mr. Norris swore that he had written his own essay in political science. And yet the identical instrument, in Mr. Seymour's handwriting, was typed for Mr. Grocer Norris in Mr. Seymour's office several days before it was given to the people. According to all signs memories were bad in Nebraska or someone had woefully blundered.

To deepen the mystery, opponents of Senator Norris began to circulate the idea that he himself was the author of the play, that he or his friends had induced the grocer to enter the race for the subtle purpose of raising sympathy for his cause. As the game of politics was conceived by his conservative critics, combining the "wealth and talents of Nebraska," that explanation seemed plausible beyond speculation. And to clinch the rumor, W. M. Stebbins, then treasurer of the state and the principal rival of Senator Norris in the contest for nomination to the Senate, broadcast the glad tidings over the radio to the voters of the commonwealth. "Both myself and my supporters," said Mr. Stebbins to the microphone, "have denounced the Broken Bow affair . . . as a scheme framed by the long-time friends and political supporters of Senator Norris to win for him sympathy, using his cousin, as perhaps, the unwitting tool of their evil design. . . . He who would profit politically by the violation of the election law is no better than the bootlegger who profits by the violation of the Volstead Act." If Senator Norris had not personally started the Grocer's racket, his friends had, and he was willing to profit by this outrage against the laws and dignity of the people. That, too, seemed clear to those to whom it was not inexplicable.

Still adhering to customary political rectitude, Mr. Stebbins also informed the electorate:

> For my part I do not want a nomination by any questionable methods, but rather by a free, unbiased, intelligent expression of the Republican voters of the state. The people of Nebraska are outstanding in energy, honesty and integrity. They should maintain their high ideals by remaining in their own parties and voting their own party ticket. If they do not do this, they encourage confusion, as above stated, and place themselves on a par with those responsible for the present confused situation.

After the court had ruled that Grocer Norris' petition had been filed too late and removed him from the fray, Mr. Stebbins expressed himself as delighted:

> I am much pleased to see the field cleared and a straight line-up brought about which everyone can understand. It is now a clear-cut contest between Senator Norris and myself. Nothing remains on the ballot to confuse the voters or prevent them making an intelligent choice. This is as it should be.

In other words, Senator Norris' project for bamboozling the voters had been defeated and Mr. Stebbins called blessed the feet of them that brought glad tidings.

The solution of the mystery then seemed to be beyond human ken, and good citizens accustomed to condemn investigations by Senate agencies began to denounce the Nye Committee as another prying and smelling body, bent on aiding Senator Norris in his campaign for reëlection and discrediting the reputable civic leaders of the state. There was plausibility in that contention also, and later Mr. Stebbins helped to give it currency by an open statement to the press. "It has been my impression," he announced gravely, "that the primary election belonged to the people of Nebraska and to each of the parties, and that the Senate Committee was going outside their rights in spending thousands of dollars of the taxpayers' money in trying to assist one of their own members to get back into the Senate. . . . I had associated with me in my campaign some of the very finest people in Nebraska. . . . Then men and women who were active in my behalf were fighting for a principle. They believed that the Senator had wasted his time upon Muscle Shoals and Boulder Dam when Nebraska was in need. They believed that the hands of the President should be upheld."

Had the Senate Committee been less indefatigable, the comedy of Broken Bow might have remained a Sybelline book and Mr. Stebbins would have lived in the memory of his compatriots as the veritable Horatius of the Platte. After all, he had enlisted on his side, as he said, some of the finest people of Nebraska. Among them was the Honorable S. R. McKelvie, former Governor of the state and then member of the Farm Board. So deep was Mr. McKelvie's interest in the outcome of the campaign that he placed $10,000 of his own money at the disposal of Mr. Stebbins, as the principal competitor of Senator Norris for the Republican nomination. This he did by indirection. He handed the money to one Max V. Beghtol, who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turned $2,500 over to the account of Charles T. Knapp and Company, who transmitted it to Charles T. Knapp, who transferred it through Beghtol to E. B. Stephenson, treasurer of the Stebbins campaign fund. In addition, $350 more went into that chest by a circuitous route, in the guise of a gift from one E. C. Foster.

Now the $2,500 grant in aid advanced by Mr. McKelvie was reported under the law of Nebraska as a free-will offering of Charles T. Knapp, euphemistically designated as "personal and miscellaneous contributions." To be sure, the law of Nebraska limits contributions received from an individual to $1,000 and requires everyone contributing more than $250 to report to the proper county clerk; but Mr. McKelvie testified that he was unaware of the existence of the statute in question. Apparently, though once Governor, he had never heard of it. But this oversight, if a violation of law as alleged, was not a violation of the custom observed by his friends. For Charles A. McCloud, Republican national committeeman for Nebraska, also contributed more than $1,000 to the Stebbins fund in a circulatory fashion, giving his money to individuals, taking their checks in return, and handing these offerings to the treasurer of the Stebbins political concern. So great a virtue is necessity.

Perhaps not unnaturally the Senate Committee was a bit surprised at this apparent legerdemain and asked Mr. McKelvie some questions about it, merely to receive an elucidation as entertaining as it was realistic:

> Senator Dill. What do you think of that sort of practice in politics, Governor, a man in high public position giving money to his attorney and his attorney turning it over to somebody else and contributing it under somebody else's name? . . .
>
> Mr. McKelvie. Well, as long as the money is not improperly used, I should say, Senator, there would be nothing improper about it.
>
> Senator Dill. You think it a practice that is not objectionable.
>
> Mr. McKelvie. Yes; I shouldn't feel it was if it was properly accounted for. . . .
>
> Senator Dill. . . . You think that was a practical way to use this money, I suppose.
>
> Mr. McKelvie. Well, I think that it was quite practical in fact, what with the information [invitation?] to contribute money to campaigns out there anyhow under any circumstances, with the impending inquiries that were at hand, it would appear that if there were a Santa Claus around who was willing to do the financing he would probably get the entire job.

As Mr. McKelvie himself stated in his announcement of May 29, 1930, appealing to the voters of Nebraska to oust Senator Norris for "political dishonesty": "The fortunes of men do not count when principles are at stake."

If the Senate Committee had depended upon the memories of men busy with civic affairs, practical men concerned with great principles rather than petty details, the mystery of Broken Bow would have remained unsolved. But Sherlock Holmes was abroad in the land, operating on the theory that banks must keep records of checks drawn and bonds transferred. In the course of its searches the Committee got on the track of a Liberty Bond on its route to Grocer Norris, who had on his own motion, if his story was true, deliberately set out in the way to the United States Senate, and in the end the committee traced the bond to the bank of W. M. Stebbins, the chief rival of Senator Norris in the primary campaign. This was as interesting as it was diverting, especially as Mr. Stebbins seemed to have been laboring under the impression earlier that friends of Senator Norris had started his alleged "cousin" on the path of glory.

As fortune would have it, Mr. Stebbins now confessed and had to come on the carpet before the Senate committee to explain the story of the wandering Liberty Bond. Early in the game he was asked when he first heard that Grocer Norris was on the political war path. He was not quite sure, but he thought that it was in April or March, apparently before the Grocer himself had been struck by political lightning, according to his own testimony. Mr. Stebbins had heard rumors when "they" were studying the state to find duplicate names "that they would file." At first Mr. Stebbins did not like the wicked game. "I discouraged it," he said, "because I don't approve of that kind of politics . . . although I will confess I entered into it finally because I believed it was the wise thing to do and my duty." And how did he go about doing "his duty"?

He went to see Victor Seymour, that busy lawyer representing Eastern trust companies, who had nothing to do with the senatorial campaign, according to his testimony. They talked over the unknown hero of Broken Bow. Mr. Seymour promised to make an inquiry. He did so inquire and in a few days reported to Mr. Stebbins that he had a proposition from the Grocer. The thrifty Grocer was ready to run for the Senate but "he wanted a $500 bond and $50 in money." After canvassing the matter with Mr. Seymour, Mr. Stebbins agreed. "I went down to the bank and got the bond," he testified, "put it in an envelope—I don't know whether it was sealed or not—and the money, and went back to his office and laid it on the table with him, and that is as far as I went; I know nothing more about it after that."

By many ardent labors the Senate committee developed the fact that the candidacy of the Grocer was arranged "at a conference in Kearney, Nebraska, participated in by Victor Seymour; Hugh H. Drake, a member of the Nebraska Railroad Commission who was running for reëlection; Oscar A. Drake, a brother; and A. Paul Johnson, an attorney from Broken Bow, who was representing Grocer Norris." In the course of the backstairs operation, Mr. Seymour transmitted $50 in cash, the Liberty Bond, and $300 more to the budding candidate for the United States Senate from Bro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ken Bow, who was discontented with Senator Norris' opposition to the confirmation of Charles E. Hughes and his stand on the power question.

When the inside history was at length revealed, Mr. Victor Seymour was serving as assistant vice-chairman of the Republican senatorial committee in charge of the election campaign throughout the country and was busy in the Denver office of the committee, with jurisdiction over the election in Nebraksa. In view of his previous testimony, Mr. Seymour's position was delicate. So he was graciously permitted to resign from his post, to seek "vindication before the people of Nebraska." Judging by the election results the vindication did not turn out exactly as expected.

That untoward result—the victory of Senator Norris at the polls in November—was certainly no part of the designs of the conservative Republicans who had opposed his nomination. A group of them felt that it was "treason" to the party to support such a "traitor" to the party, and so they were moved by "loyalty" to the party to support the Democratic nominee against Senator Norris, Gilbert M. Hitchcock, who had never made any Republican pretensions, but was deemed "sound" according to the principles of men tried and true. A conference was held in Washington, attended by S. R. McKelvie, of the Farm Board, E. B. Stephenson, formerly treasurer of the Stebbins committee, and R. H. Lucas, executive director of the Republican National Committee. At this conference a campaign was mapped out to sidetrack Senator Norris, apparently at all costs.

To these statesmen, who thought the fortunes of men as nothing when great principles were at stake, two brilliant ideas occurred and were carried into execution under the direction of Mr. Lucas. One took the form of a cartoon, headed "Al Smith-Raskob Idea of Happiness," portraying a barroom scene and suggesting that Senator Norris favored a return to this institution of wickedness. The other was "an alleged letter purporting to come from a Tammany organization urging Democratic support of Senator Norris." To these evidences of genius was added a booklet containing savage attacks on the Senator and reprints from hostile papers. The illuminating literature thus concocted was sent broadcast in Nebraska, not overlooking the three thousand precinct committeemen.

To conceal the origin of this higher propaganda from the public gaze, its authors informed the publisher's staff that the order came from John M. Fetters, of Omaha, who has not yet been located. On deeper inquiry the Nye Committee wrung from one Stengle, an executive of the publishing company, testimony to the effect that the order had really been placed by Mr. Lucas, who had instructed him to put it under the name of Fetters and ship the literary goods to E. B. Stephenson, treasurer of the Republican Club in Lincoln.

And where did the money come from? After the mystery of the print-shop had been unveiled, Mr. Lucas testified that he had paid the printing bill out of his own funds and that he had borrowed the money. At a later stage it was discovered that when he obtained the loan for this purpose he authorized the bank in question to hold as security a covering balance from a special account of the Republican National Committee, of which he had full charge under instructions of the Treasurer. This was curious, too, for Senator Fess, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, had publicly declared that Senator Norris and all other Republican candidates at the regular election would receive the support of his committee. Apparently there was a slip somewhere in the works.

What is the moral of this tale? Many suggestions will come to the untroubled spectator. He may think that it chiefly emphasizes the broken and confused condition of the major political parties, a cleavage along economic lines, which no high-flown language of statecraft can obscure. Something is to be said for that view. But there is another upshot of greater significance: it is the intellectual bankruptcy of conservativism in the United States. Can anyone imagine George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Daniel Webster, or William McKinley so inept in action, so crude in negotiation, so little gifted with eloquence in the presence of a crisis? There was a time in our history when the conservative cause, strong, rational, appealing to practical men, was defended in grand orations of the Cicero-Pitt-Burke-Webster-Choate-Spooner tradition. Even opponents felt a sense of elevation and power in its presence. Now it has reached such a pass that its spokesmen in the forum must resort to a grocery in Broken Bow for relief, aid and comfort. And since conservatives are lacking in flint, the radicals are also in a desperate plight themselves, for they have nothing on which to sharpen their blades. Our capacity for high enterprise seems palsied at a critical moment in our history and there appears to be no balm in Gilead. Not since P. T. Barnum and Artemus Ward departed this life has the nation been so lacking in political talents.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

Unconsuming Fire

Whither strains the breathing flame,
The urging light in the fleet river,
The push of leaf on the wailing tree,
And the world that breaks in golden shiver?

The unconsuming fire that fills
The bird's cry, or darkens pain
In lovers' eyes will find nowhere
Healing and assuaging rain.

But we, condemned, the seared, the flaming,
Wake this day and another one,
Quick with the planetary dream,
Stung with the fierce, invading sun.

HELEN CORNELIUS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bankers as Revolutionaries

ON THE DAY that the German banks closed their doors, there came from His Majesty's Stationery Office in London one of the most interesting official publications that have seen the light in recent years. The Report of the Macmillan Committee on Finance and Industry is as topical as it is readable. It might have been composed, in anticipation, as a commentary on this German crash. As I looked up from it to glance at the latest news from Berlin, I recalled a romance fashionable in my boyhood in which was described the destruction of the earth by an implacable comet. I remember how I would get up, as I pored, spellbound, on a still winter evening, over its not too scientific pages, creep fearfully to the window and pull the curtains aside, to see whether that comet with its blazing brand were yet visible in the sky. Here in this coldly scientific report, drafted many months ago, was the astronomers' prediction of the catastrophe which actually broke upon us as the printer gave its pages to the world. One looked out at the comet, shivered, and admired the precision of these star-gazers.

There is much in this report which has interest only for the English reader, but the chapters which deal with the world-wide depression are everyone's concern. No one expected a radical document of this kind. The Committee was appointed two years ago by Mr. Snowden, who is himself the safest and most orthodox of financiers. It had as its chairman Lord Macmillan, an able Conservative Scottish lawyer. It was packed with important bankers; no less than four of them, including a director of the Bank of England. Other members represented big business in one form or another. Only one name—that of Mr. Keynes—suggested radical thinking about money, and it was balanced by that of Professor Gregory, the ablest academic exponent of the opposite view. There were, indeed, three representatives of the right wing of the Labor movement, but none of them had qualifications for a task of this complexity and, in fact, their influence has been negligible.

One expected from the majority a report on lines which the City of London would approve, with a bias toward contraction, a complacent attitude toward past policies and much sage advice for the future of the kind that spokesmen of the creditor class commonly give—to the effect that governments must practise economy and workmen accept lower wages. To this, one supposed, Mr. Keynes and two or three colleagues would append a minute of dissent on expansionist lines. That has not happened. The report, save for one dissentient, is unanimous and it is as frankly critical of past policies as it is boldly expansionist in its outlook on the future. There are, to be sure, several "addenda" by individuals and one, upon still more radical lines, by a group led by Mr. Keynes, but they do not lessen the effect of the main document which carries all their signatures, with the sole exception of Lord Bradbury, a veteran Treasury official who is alone in maintaining the "sound" old views of the Victorian age.

The result is a startling victory for the modern school, which one must now regard, in England at least, as the exponent of a new orthodoxy. It is a considerable event in contemporary British politics that the report should frankly ascribe much of our persistent unemployment to the error which Mr. Churchill committed in 1925, when, with the approval of the City and all sound thinkers, he put us back upon the gold standard at the old parity, while the sterling price level was still much above that of the rest of the world. That deadly error of judgment increased the burden of our war debt, penalized our export trades, fostered imports, exposed the Bank of England to continuous losses of gold and compelled it to defend its reserves by measures which inevitably contracted credit and depressed trade. The Committee does not doubt that adherence to the gold standard is for this country a necessity, but it realizes in retrospect, as Mr. Keynes did at the time, that we could have stabilized sterling at a lower parity with the dollar. It advocates for the future a "managed" gold standard. It drops the old superstition that any gold reserve whatever is required for internal trading as a cover for the note issue. That need vanished when we ceased to use gold coins. A reserve of gold is required only to adjust our external balance. It follows the League of Nations' experts in suggesting greater elasticity in reckoning reserves, and many ways of economizing the world's diminishing supply of gold.

But the main recommendation of the report ranks its publication as an international event. It dismisses, with a vehemence of language rare in official documents, the advice of the orthodox persons who would have us scale down wages to conform with the price level of the world depression. It predicts that any attempt to achieve equilibrium between prices and costs in this way must mean intolerable social and international tension. It proposes as the remedy a concerted policy, in which Central Banks must coöperate, to restore world prices to the level of 1928, and when this is attained, to keep them stable at that level. It is, in short, an expansionist manifesto. It would raise prices, by swelling the volume of credit at home and organizing the distribution of loan capital abroad.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is when this able and lucidly written document analyzes the causes and consequences of the world depression that one perceives its relevance to Germany's crisis. Any great fall in prices has a way of making history. The relations of class to class, and of nation to nation, are changed: the creditors gain and the debtors lose.

> A study of history [to quote the Report] would, we believe, confirm the opinion that it is in the changes in the level of prices, and in the consequential alteration in the position of debtors and creditors, entrepreneurs and workers, peasants and the tax-gatherer, that the main secret of social trouble is to be found.

One has no difficulty in finding illustrations from recent experiences to buttress that belief. The price of rice fell last year in Burma by a half: today the peasant cultivators over wide regions are in armed revolt. Wheat, jute, rice and, indeed, every crop on which the Indian peasant relied to pay rent, taxes, and the usurer's unconscionable claims, fell last year —by anything up to 50 percent—with the suddenness of a tropical storm; the masses thereafter were ready for Mr. Gandhi's summons. Wool fell by 40 percent: Australia went off the gold standard and has been struggling ever since in the grip of her creditors in London City. At bottom this, too, was Germany's case. Wholesale prices (following the Economist index) fell between the average of 1928 and February of this year from 135 to 91. If the Young Commission's estimate, made at the close of 1928, of what she could fairly pay was reasonable then, the appreciation of gold made its reckoning in the interval 32 percent too high. Clearly, as the report says, the effects upon "political and social stability" of this "violent downturn of prices" raise "problems that transcend in importance any others of our time and generation."

Expert thinkers, in England as elsewhere, have been sharply divided in their interpretation of the causes of this world-wide fall in prices. The debates within the Committee, which included several schools of thought, have resulted in a surprisingly clear formulation of these causes. Many events and tendencies in the post-war world which one cannot call monetary had upset its economic stability and changed the conditions under which the international gold standard had to work. These new conditions set a difficult problem for the Central Bankers, which they did not succeed in solving. Their failure led to the appreciation of gold and the consequent fall of commodity prices.

> The recent world-wide fall of prices is best described as a monetary phenomenon which has occurred as a result of the monetary system failing to solve successfully a problem of unprecedented difficulty and complexity set it by a conjunction of highly intractable non-monetary phenomena.

The report enumerates eight of these new conditions, but the two on which it lays the chief stress are war debts and the growth of tariffs; after these come the rapidity of technical changes and the Wall Street speculative fever. Tariffs, of course, made it difficult for debtors to pay except in gold; while war debts resulted in the abnormal flow of this gold to New York and Paris. That still goes on. In two years, from January 1, 1929, to January 1, 1931, the creditor countries increased their holding of the world's gold from 65 to 74.5 percent: the debtor countries saw their holding shrink from a third to a quarter (35 to 25.5 percent).

The assumptions in this argument stand in need of some expansion. The first of them is that it is the task of the Central Banks to keep gold, as the world's measure of value, stable in terms of commodities. The old-world banker was a man of routine, with a local and limited horizon, and even today his successor is apt to scoff at the theorists and dispute this international duty. The consequences are the sudden chaos that has overtaken us all. But the task is not easy. Like a student of weather and atmospheric movements, the modern banker must take the whole planet as his field, watching every congestion and dispersal of gold. For if, at any point in space, it accumulates unused, then to that extent the world's available supply of monetary gold is diminished. It is buried and hoarded; it might as well not exist, for it sustains no superstructure of credit. Gold, by the usual practice of the banks, is the basis for nine or ten times its value in bankers' credit. Now it may well happen, when gold does accumulate in this way in Paris or New York, that the national bank has good reasons for not using it at home to expand credit. That is for it to judge. But in that case (so the Macmillan Committee argues) its international duty is to make it available to the world at large in other ways. It might be used to buy goods from abroad; but tariffs stand in the way. Failing this, the right course is to lend it, or invest it abroad. If neither of these uses is chosen, then the gold is sterilized, and by so much (or rather by ten times more) the world's volume of buying power is diminished. There is then no escape from the inevitable, on any reading of the quantity theory of money. Prices must fall the world over, with all the consequences of shaken confidence, lower output, unemployment and unrest.

That this, in fact, is what happened, the report demonstrates by a close analysis of events and statistics. The main stress is laid on the failure to lend. America was lending extensively to Europe before the boom began. The boom reversed the process. The action taken in New York to stop it resulted in a violent contraction of credit. Simultaneously the European banks were driven to the same course to stop the drain of gold; for Paris, too, was hoarding. France, as we all know, is not unwilling to lend, but only on political terms, designed to impose her dictation over Europe. In an unusually human passage the Committee, surveying these chapters of recent history, drops a patriotic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tear over the vanished financial supremacy of London. This kind of thing did not happen in those palmy pre-war days. London lent freely, and free-trade England bought: there was no congestion of gold. To which the American reader may retort that the Victorian bankers had not to create monetary order in a world ruined at Versailles by Mr. Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau.

So far the astronomers. Once more, like the little boy, I go to the window, and this time without a doubt the comet is approaching. The moral is clear, but where is the will to apply it? Assuredly we must deal with the non-monetary factors, above all reparations. We dare not forget armaments. But will much avail, unless we can turn the bankers into disinterested and scientific trustees of an international society which has yet to be created? Failing this conversion, they will continue to promote world revolution with an efficiency that Moscow must envy.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

London.

Graft in Business [1]

III: *Bonuses, Corporation Juggling and Banks as Pawns*

ONE OF the most extraordinary episodes in business during the last year grew out of the effort of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation to absorb the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. In that proposed merger the plans of Mr. Charles Schwab and Mr. Eugene Grace, rulers of the Bethlehem organization, were thwarted by Mr. Cyrus K. Eaton, the Cleveland banker, who carried his opposition to the merger into the courts and succeeded in bringing to the surface some very extraordinary facts which kept the battle on the first pages of the newspapers for many weeks.

The sensational and most damaging fact brought out by Eaton was the bonus system which was in effect in the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. It is accepted almost without question in our capitalistic society that managers receive large salaries for their services, but Eaton disclosed the fact that the board of directors of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation voted to various officials of the corporation, many of whom were members of the board of directors, bonuses which ran to enormous sums. These bonuses began in 1917 and were paid first to eight or ten of the officers and finally to about twenty-one.

A group of stockholders of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation who made a public protest against the system summed it up as follows:

> The amount of the bonuses is most unseemly and improper. The president, Mr. Grace, it now appears, received in the year 1929 a bonus of $1,623,753 and in the year 1930 a bonus of $1,015,591. During the period in which these bonuses for executive officers have been in force, and up to the close of 1928, there has been taken out of the corporate treasury for this purpose $31,878,255 as against $40,886,996 paid to common stockholders. In other words, 80 percent of the amount distributed as common dividends to the owners of the equity of the property. In the four years 1925-1928 inclusive, during which not a dollar of dividends was paid to the common stockholders, $6,800,524 in bonuses was paid to these few favored directors and other executives. The president alone took $3,105,963 as bonuses during these years.

It must not be supposed that Mr. Eaton, who appeared as the St. George brandishing his sword against the Bethlehem dragon, was so very much of a St. George after all. He fought Schwab and Grace because they thwarted his plans for getting the Youngstown Steel and Tube Company for his own interests. And what were Mr. Eaton's interests? He is a banker—an investment banker. He has been dabbling in iron and steel for six or seven years, just as he has been dabbling in rubber and other things which happen to get themselves into his gigantic schemes. As a matter of fact, Cyrus S. Eaton's financial operations offer a perfect example of the manner in which an investment banker, using other people's money, piles up huge profits for himself by all kinds of indirect means.

Mr. Eaton organized a group of investment companies, among them Continental Shares, Commonwealth Securities, Inc., International Shares Corporation, Inland Investors and others, into which large numbers of people were invited to put their funds. They did this, and before very long Mr. Eaton had at his disposal several hundred million dollars which he was then at liberty to use to carry out his plans. This is the way he operated.

The Trumbull Iron and Steel Company needed money and requested Eaton and his associates to provide it. This they did and in the process had themselves elected controlling directors of Trumbull. About this time they were accumulating the stock of the Republic and Inland Steel companies for the purpose of bringing about their great merger. To do this they were using the funds of other people concentrated in various investment companies which they had formed. As controlling directors of the

[1] The series of articles of which this is the last will appear, in greatly expanded form, as part of the contents of a book to be published under the same title in September by the Vanguard Press.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trumbull Steel Company they had, of course, its funds and finances under their complete control and so they used $775,000 of the money of the Trumbull company to buy 18,929 shares of Inland stock and 19,000 shares of Republic stock. Having thus obtained holdings of Republic stock, Mr. Eaton caused himself and his associates to be elected members of the Republic board and as its directors voted to acquire the Trumbull company. When the Republic company, of which Mr. Eaton was a director, was about to purchase the Trumbull company, of which Mr. Eaton was also a director, Otis and Company, of which he was also a partner, turned up with an option to buy 100,000 shares of Trumbull stock at $9. This had to be adjusted. The adjustment was worked out by permitting Otis and Company to get one share of Republic stock for five shares of Trumbull. Under this they got 20,000 shares of Republic at $45, though its market price was approximately $60 a share at the time—a discount of $300,000. Where did Otis and Company get this option? When Otis and Company made a contract with Trumbull to finance it they were given this option in addition to their commission which was $1,280,000.

Of course, Mr. Eaton's interests became so extensive that after a while they became difficult for him to juggle successfully and the disclosures in the Bethlehem suit began to warn stockholders in these various corporations that their interests were being utilized to advance the schemes of Mr. Eaton instead of to advance the interests of the various corporations of which he was a director.

The Fight Against the Lofts

The trough of a business cycle—which we call a depression—seems to be the happy hunting ground for rebels, rebels in business as well as in politics, and the period following the famous crash of October, 1929, will always be remembered for the numerous revolts which were launched in various great industrial corporations. Among the corporations which felt the shock of revolt was the Loft Candy Company.

The Loft Candy Company, it is true, had been started and built up by George W. Loft from very humble beginnings. There is no doubt that Loft had exceptional ability, but there comes a time when the organizer's or leader's ability and initiative are not sufficient by themselves, when his own resources are inadequate and he is compelled to take in partners. The popular method of doing this is to incorporate and join together in a large coöperative enterprise the resources of many people. Therefore when Loft built his candy business larger and wider and needed more and more funds he had to take in more and more partners until finally he had 5,000 stockholders.

Of course, Loft himself had a large part of his own fortune in the candy company. Like his stockholders he depended for his profit on this investment, but unlike his stockholders he received a salary of $50,000 a year as president of the company, and this salary he got whether the business was good or bad. As it turned out, the business was not good—at least it was not good enough to pay any dividends to the stockholders, who for seven years went without any profit whatever on their investment.

A few years ago Loft retired and was succeeded by his son at a salary of $25,000 a year. It cannot be contended that these salaries were excessive as corporation salaries go. But it soon came to light that the salaries represented practically the only interest of the Lofts in the candy business, for Loft and his son had divested themselves of their stocks. About the beginning of January, 1929, all the officers of the Loft Candy Company together owned only 201 shares of stock out of a total of 650,000 shares, with a value of about $1,600 out of a total of $5,000,000.

However, the people whose money was invested in the business without any profit finally became dissatisfied and a committee of stockholders was organized, chiefly under the inspiration of Mr. Alfred Miller, an investment banker. Miller, assisted by others, had little difficulty in getting the proxies of 370,122 shares, a majority of the stock in the company. When the annual meeting arrived in March, the stage was set for a battle on the Lofts—a battle to oust them, to demand an accounting from them and to take over the control of the company. What followed revealed once again the attitude of many corporation managers toward their corporations. Miller's crowd had a clear majority of the stock, but when the stockholders' meeting assembled, the Lofts immediately raised a point of no quorum. Being in control of the machinery, like the election commissioners in a political voting booth, they held numerous Miller proxies to be illegal. At the end of the roll call Miller was able to show only 302,000 proxies held to be valid by the Loft machine, some 70,000 of his proxies being ruled out as illegal. This was less than one-half of all the shares outstanding. The Lofts had a good many proxies—several hundred thousand—but very many too few to contend successfully in an election with Miller's proxies. However, the Lofts did not present any of their proxies. If they had, their shares and Miller's together would have been sufficient to make a quorum. By withholding their proxies and by ruling out as illegal a large number of Miller's proxies they were able to defeat the quorum. Thus the meeting had to be adjourned, and the Lofts, with 201 shares of stock, continued in control of a corporation with 650,000 shares outstanding.

The Caldwell Debacle

It must not be supposed that the directors of the Bank of United States were the only ones who practised financial juggling. In a somewhat dif-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ferent way we have been treated to a similar spectacle in Tennessee, Kentucky and Arkansas, where the failure of a group of banks has brought to light the operations of another group of very distinguished business men.

Roger Caldwell was the head of Caldwell and Company, an old established investment banking house in Nashville, Tennessee, founded in 1876, which rose to be one of the largest, if not the largest, in the South. Under Caldwell's domination was a group of powerful banks. They were the United Bank of Tennessee, the Liberty Bank and Trust Company, the Holston Union Bank of Knoxville and the National Bank of Kentucky. Backed by the financial resources of these institutions and many smaller affiliated banks, Caldwell and Company embarked on one of those widespread programs of expansion so familiar to us, in which they got under their control industries and financial concerns of all sorts, including banks, security companies, insurance companies, as well as newspapers and manufacturing establishments. In June, 1930, they formed one of those bank-holding companies with which we are also familiar—the Banco-Kentucky Corporation.

It was then proudly pointed out that this created a structure which controlled banks and insurance companies with combined assets of $615,000,000. The two chief companies, we were told, had combined capital and surplus of $100,000,000, with a control of banks having resources of $285,000,000 and deposits of $225,000,000, while the insurance companies related in like manner had admitted assets of $216,000,000 and insurance in force of $1,840,000,000.

A few weeks later it was announced that Caldwell and Company was forming a holding company to handle and control its insurance affiliations, in Kentucky, Arkansas, South Carolina, Texas, Ohio and Missouri.

In the fall this extensive collection of financial cells was threatened with disintegration. The persistent shrinkage of securities began to tell on it. Then the gentlemen sitting in the center of the web began to shift funds around from one bank to another, and from the banks to other financial affiliates. Huge loans were made to Caldwell and Company by banks, great sums used in the market to support the stocks and finally millions of state funds were deposited in various banks belonging to the group to save them from disaster. However, on November 13, the Caldwell house, crushed under the load of its vast imprudences, was forced into a receivership. This was the signal for one of the most disastrous series of bank failures that the South has ever known. Immediately the important banks with which these gentlemen were associated were closed. The National Bank of Tennessee, the Holston Union Bank of Knoxville and the Liberty Bank and Trust Company shut their doors. On November 17 fifty-seven banks in the South closed in one day. The National Bank of Kentucky, after ninety-eight years of operation and growth, closed its doors. Meanwhile smaller banks all over Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas were closing down.

This is not the only group which has run upon the rocks. There have been many others which have not failed but have been practising precisely the same kind of finance. They differ from the Bank of United States and the Caldwell crowd only in that they have managed their cluster of interests more intelligently and hence have escaped ruin and at the same time the exposure of their methods.

Proposals for Reform

A fine beginning has been made in the war on commercial bribery. But we have not travelled very far in the matter of setting up severe ethical standards for corporation managers and directors. These gentlemen do not, perhaps, engage in those raw, unvarnished dishonesties which their lesser business fellows employ who permit bribers to cross their palms with cash. Their ways are more subtle. Well established and more or less respectable fictions varnish over the unfinished surfaces of their dishonesty. But their offenses are far more serious.

We have to get a clear understanding of the fact that the corporation has now become our most serious economic problem. I do not speak of the trust, and I am not thinking of monopolies. The ordinary corporation poses for us so many serious industrial and financial problems that there is no way of considering it intelligently without taking the subject of corporation law bodily over into the domain of economics. That done, nothing short of a general and drastic revision or remaking of corporation practice should be accepted.

I have no intention of proposing any program for corporate reform here. But I indicate a few things which are essential.

1. The use of the holding company should be made illegal under all circumstances. There is and can be no objection to the corporation. It will undoubtedly be—already is, in fact—the universal method of doing business. But there is no reason why all the business of a corporation should not be done under the shelter of a single corporate entity.

2. No corporation should be permitted to own stock in any other corporation, with, of course, certain obvious exceptions.

3. The stock-holdings of all directors and officers should be a matter of public knowledge, together with a full statement at all times of all sums paid to them or corporations in which they are interested.

4. The compensation of all officials and directors, including all sums received by them directly and indirectly, should be made known to all stockholders.

5. The problem of the directorate of corporations will have to be considered. As matters stand the directorate and the officers constitute a group

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of officials responsible to a perfectly helpless electorate. It is so widely scattered and so little able to follow the conduct of the directors that the directors become autocrats. How this is to be remedied is not very clear, but I venture to propose that the way toward that lies in providing two boards of directors. One would be a purely management board, made up exclusively of administrative leaders within the industry. The other board would be a purely supervisory one. It would deal with none of the mechanics of management and its sole function would be to select the managing board and scrutinize its activities. It would be made up only of large investors in the stock of the corporation, investors whose holdings are so large that they would have a substantial interest in the honest and efficient management of the company.

Finally an end must be put to the practice of men holding membership on innumerable boards. The effect of this is to treat most of the memberships as honorary and of no consequence. They do not attend meetings, certainly do not follow the affairs of the companies they are supposed to direct. This multiplying of directorships also results in that condition emphasized in this series where corporations are run by men who have no other interest in them save to use them for the advantage of some other corporation in which they are vitally interested. The old evil of interlocking directorates is still a serious one. One would have to be an optimist indeed to believe that there can be very much improvement in corporate ethics until this vicious practice is brought to an end.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

An Educational Tragi-Comedy

THE REFLECTIONS embodied in the present essay arise from the fact that the writer, as one actively engaged in education, has been impressed by the irrelevance to his own chief perplexities of much of the educational research which is going on in the colleges. A great part of what is called research must, of course, be dismissed at once as mere stupidity.

From time to time I receive questionnaires from aspirants for Ph.D. degrees engaged in the writing of a thesis. Not long ago, I received a perfect specimen in which I was asked to state the time devoted in my school to each of a variety of "objectives." Among other things I was solemnly asked to state the amount of time spent daily in teaching "emotional control." This questionnaire emanated from the educational department of a well known university and, presumably, it was sent out with the consent of the head of the department. Perhaps it was supposed that in, say, the nursery school we spend from 9.30 to 9.50 each morning in teaching emotional control!

At all events, this particular piece of imbecility was by no means an extreme example of its kind, and I have received a great many such questionnaires, the answers to which, when collected and treated with the right statistical alchemy, could serve no conceivable purpose except that of earning the collector the coveted Ph.D. But even turning to the work done by more serious students I cannot feel that what is being achieved has any importance compared with that of the major unsolved problems in education.

Immense time and trouble are devoted to various methods of improving the technique of teaching. This work is useful and, if a given piece of arithmetic can be taught in three days instead of in four, so much the better, but it can hardly be claimed that advance along this line is likely greatly to enhance the quality of our civilization. But also, a great deal of what is called research seems to me either positively useless or pernicious. For example, researches in the curriculum are being carried on which claim to be scientific, but which are yet based, unconsciously perhaps, upon a philosophy which ought to be opposed by all who care for civilization. There are workers in the universities who solemnly ask a collection of business men what facts they have found it most useful to know, and then suggest that these facts ought to form the basis of a new curriculum. Or, again, a group of workers at Teachers College have, with incredible industry, arranged some thousands of words in the order of the frequency of their occurrence. It is thus possible for a teacher to know which hundred words are most used in the English language. What he is to do with this knowledge, I am not quite sure. I can hardly suppose that he is to ask his children to learn these words as mere words, nor can I suppose that people are to be employed to write stories using only these words, though this, no doubt, would be a useful piece of "creative research" for someone.

What most of these workers seem to forget is that education, at bottom, is not a science at all. Any education will have, or ought to have, as part of its object the creation of civilized communities of adults. What a civilized community is remains, of course, a matter of dispute. What we feel to be its attributes will depend in each one of us upon our general attitude toward life and the sense of values we have developed, but it is just for this reason that anyone who values the ideal of a liberal education will feel horror at the suggestion that facts which business men have found it useful to know should be a basis for a curriculum.

This is not an imaginary danger. Recently a certain music school which provides instruction at low rates for children of the poor was appealing for funds. It circulated leaflets describing the value of music and it was astonishing to note how grossly utilitarian many of these were. For example, one leaflet was entirely concerned with the fact that, in certain factories, music played during the work increases output. Surely there has never been a time before in the history of the world when it was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

necessary to defend music by advocating it as a means of diluting the noise of a factory! Presumably it was thought that this appeal would be effective or it would not have been made, but that it should have been made is a grave reflection on our prevailing notions of value.

With this idea in mind, that education has to do with the production of civilized communities, let us turn now to some problems on which real leadership is required. I have in mind particularly three problems of which most teachers are not fully aware, and on which few have developed any clear ideas. Take, for example, the question of peace and war. There is a wide consensus of opinion that the next major conflict may destroy our civilization, and yet the possibility of another first-class war seems far from remote. Nevertheless, the average human being is not merely indifferent to this problem, but is equipped with a set of habitual attitudes which means that, with very little trouble indeed, he can be aroused to any extremity of patriotic bellicosity.

We are aware that the problem has to do partly with the manner in which history is taught in the various countries, but it is clear that the matter goes much deeper than this and that fundamental attitudes are involved. If adults are to be changed in this respect, the problem is one for education to solve. It is my own personal belief that the average school inculcates in its pupils patterns of group behavior which lead inevitably, in adult life, to the most virulent forms of patriotism. Furthermore, patriotism seems to be, not an instinct, but a sentiment, and, as such, capable of profound modification by means of education. This, however, is an opinion and the opinion of one who is not an expert in psychology. Surely, as a problem which deeply concerns the whole future of our civilization, it is well worth the serious and detailed attention of experts. It would be infinitely more valuable to know how to bring up a generation of children who would know how to live together peaceably, than to know how to save 10 percent of the time now spent in the teaching of the multiplication table. Yet I know of hardly any serious work being done on this subject except by amateurs.

"Adjustment" is one of the most commonly used words in modern education and has, indeed, attained the status of a new "objective." It is, however, clear enough that we are all very badly adjusted to life, as it is going to be lived, if we are at any moment liable to attacks of mass insanity leading to large scale war. Nevertheless, everyone knows that in nine schools out of ten, all the practices which were in vogue before the last war for the promotion of "right thinking" on international matters are still in vogue. If the generation which is growing up is being trained in much the same way as the generation which plunged into the late War, then, presumably, it will plunge into its own war in due course. The present activity of pacifist leagues in this matter seems to me almost childishly irrelevant. I should like myself to see a serious psychological study of the whole background of emotional conditioning in childhood which is productive of the present attitudes of adults toward international affairs. This would be a big and difficult task but it would require no more effort than is now being spent on subjects which are incomparably less important.

This leads to the cognate and, perhaps, identical problem of partisanship in general. Our civilization demands increasingly the ability to coöperate with others and the ability to imagine the needs and desires of those outside of one's immediate, instinctive circle. To my mind, though this is again the opinion of an amateur, a great deal of partisanship which most people regard as virtue and dignify by the name of loyalty has become in many spheres a major obstacle to progress. For example, if in the British coal industry the coal miners were less loyal to coal miners and the coal owners to coal owners, it is probable that a solution of the difficult problems facing it might have been arrived at and put into practice before the problem had become as acute as it now is. It never occurs to the average human being that loyalty can ever be a vice. I take it that this is partly the result of instinct and partly the result of the conditioning which instinct has received in school and in the home. At all events, here again is a problem of immense importance which schools are doing nothing whatever to solve and in which the teachers colleges in particular seem to give no leadership.

A third problem worth considering is that concerned with individuality. In old-fashioned schools the sense of the value of the community is developed by what might be called militaristic methods. In modern schools there is a reaction from this and the individual is considered all-important. There is, therefore, wide criticism of children brought up by modern methods as being inconsiderate and without any proper feeling for the rights of others. There is here a really difficult, psychological problem. In the English public schools and in many American adult communities, the sense of the community means, among other things, the destruction of individual eccentricity and a belief that everybody should be like everybody else.

Most liberals deplore this attitude and bring up their children without this respect for conformity. But anarchism, like patriotism, is not enough. It is quite clear that in any society whatever, there must be some sense of responsibility for the genuine, common interests of the community. There should be not only respect for the rights of the individual on the part of the chief organs of community opinion, but also a respect by each individual for the indubitable rights of others. How is it possible to achieve this without resorting to the old-fashioned methods which produce, at the same time, undesirable forms of herd instinct? How, in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other words, are we to produce in our schools free, creative individuals jealous of the rights of individuality and, at the same time, citizens capable of coöperation and filled with an adequate sense of responsibility?

Most existing schools and most teachers are aware of only one side of this problem. I do not believe that it has been adequately considered by experts or that data exist for a complete solution. It might be suggested in reply that this is one of those questions which will be solved only by a genius, and that the personality of the genius will be the determining factor. But if only a genius at the head of each school can preserve the necessary balance, then the future will be dark indeed. But probably this is not the case: for example, the modern English public school system was, no doubt, largely due to the genius (if we wish to call it such) of Dr. Arnold of Rugby. Nevertheless, when once a technique had been developed, others were able to perpetuate his ideas without needing his original inspirations. I am not an admirer of these schools and I quote them simply as affording evidence of the way in which a technique for producing certain attitudes may perpetuate itself successfully for several generations. In these days, however, there is such a parade of the new science of education that one would expect its practitioners to be attempting, by their own methods, the solution of these important problems instead of waiting for the inspiration of the mere artist in education.

My contention, then, is that, on the one hand, an immense amount of time and thought and money are being spent on researches which, however useful in their way, are of minor importance if we think of education as being chiefly the torch-bearer of civilization, while, on the other hand, little direction is being given from the acknowledged leaders of educational theory and practice in the methods by which the teachers in the schools may help to train a generation that is likely to grapple more successfully than ours has done with the main problems which threaten the security of civilization.

W. B. CURRY.

Washington Notes

Furren Affairs—Political and Professional Drys—Will Roosevelt Pussyfoot?—Smith and the Wets

THE NOVELTY of the moratorium having worn off and conditions in Germany momentarily being quieter, various and sundry domestic issues have recently reappeared and gained a certain amount of public attention. It is still clear that foreign affairs will be more conspicuously to the front in the 1932 campaign than in any since 1920, but that they will completely overshadow all else is not proving to be the case. For one thing, the American people are naturally more concerned with their own troubles than with those of other nations. A small—a very small percentage—is intelligent enough to realize that the welfare of the United States is inextricably bound up with the rest of the world, and that a financial crash in Germany would disastrously affect things here.

The vast bulk of the people are incapable of any such intelligent understanding of the situation and have only the vaguest notion about the whole war-debt and reparations business. The problems of making a living, and prohibition, still occupy the so-called mind of the average voter to the exclusion of nearly everything else. He is not capable of carrying any greater mental load than that imposed by these two problems—and he is not capable of very deep reasoning about them. The difficulties of the first have greatly increased under the Hoover administration and the average citizen's tendency is to vote against the party in power, with the idea both of punishing it for its failure and of improving conditions.

As for prohibition, the theory that it could be shoved into a secondary position by economic issues has a certain amount of justification, but none the less it remains the issue about which men—and women, too—are most deeply stirred in this country, and which most deeply divides each of the two parties. Within the past week the fact that prohibition will be the most controversial of all questions before the Democratic National Convention was again demonstrated by the attack of the Dry leaders upon Roosevelt's candidacy.

Recent developments seem to have convinced the Dry leaders, as they have the politicians, that Roosevelt's chances of becoming the Democratic candidate for President are far better than those of any other aspirant. Hence there came some days ago a typical Anti-Saloon League blast against the New York Governor, who is denounced as a repealist and a nullifier. It was, in fact, quite a blast, but except as an indication of the lead Roosevelt has in the nomination race, it did not seem to me especially significant. All it meant was that the professional Drys will be on the Republican side in the coming campaign.

There is a difference between the professional Drys and the political Drys. The political Drys in the Democratic party in the South and West unquestionably prefer Governor Roosevelt to any Democrat with a chance for the nomination, which means they prefer him to Young, Baker, Smith or Ritchie. The hostility of the professional Drys of the Cannon-McBride type in no way lessens the Rooseveltian leanings of the political Drys.

It does, however, make it clear that eventually Roosevelt must meet a test in this matter and upon the way he meets it may hinge his nomination. No one, I think, doubts that the pivotal fight in the Democratic convention—and for that matter, in the Republican convention, too,—will be waged over the prohibition plank in the platform. On the Democratic side, ex-Governor Smith and his friend Raskob are the leaders in the fight to have the convention declare flatly for repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

Mr. Roosevelt, though on record for the repeal, last March sensationally sided with the Southern and Western Dry Democrats, who resented Raskob's effort to have the National Convention recommend such a plank. At that time Roosevelt, speaking through Farley, chairman of the New York state committee, went no farther than to assert

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his opposition to the committee for usurping the prerogatives of the convention. He felt it "unwise" for the committee to anticipate. That, as I pointed out at the time, was far from saying he would oppose the Raskob plank in the convention. However, it was certainly so construed by the Southern and Western Democrats, who are exceedingly anxious, for local political reasons, to have the 1932 platform contain no stronger Wet declaration that the 1928 platform, which had none at all. Believing that Governor Roosevelt sympathizes with these Dry Democrats and will not join those who want to "force an unequivocal Wet declaration down out throats," they have almost unitedly lined up behind him.

Almost anyone, I think, will agree that it is this support, springing out of Farley's attitude at the time of the committee meeting last spring and stimulated by hostility to Raskob and fear of Smith, that has given Mr. Roosevelt his present long lead. Also, I think it will be agreed that this support is not enough to nominate him and that to get a majority of the convention, much less the necessary two-thirds, Roosevelt must have the votes of a number of the really Wet states of the North and East.

Before any delegate, however, gets a chance to vote for him in the convention, Mr. Roosevelt will have to take one side or the other on the platform declaration. I do not think he will be allowed to "get by" without. If he insists upon being "neutral" and saying nothing, it will, of course, amount to siding with the Southern and Western Drys, who want no declaration, and this will naturally infuriate the Raskob Wet element. A refusal actively to favor the Wet plank might easily mean a real break with ex-Governor Smith. I think it is pretty well established now that though Smith probably will not actively oppose Roosevelt's candidacy, there is no real cordiality between them, and all of the anti-Roosevelt hostility in New York comes from friends of Smith. It has, however, been recognized that there is no way in which Smith can array himself against Roosevelt in the convention, unless they should separate on some matter of public policy. Smith can leave him on a matter of principle but not on the grounds of a personal preference. Obviously Roosevelt's strategy is to give Al no such excuse and that is the reason I am confident that when the time comes Roosevelt will favor the Raskob plank.

He cannot afford a break with Smith on this issue for two reasons. One, of course, is that it would enable Smith to take command of the Wet forces in the convention and center them behind someone else. They would not, it is true, be sufficient to nominate but they would be sufficient to prevent Roosevelt from getting his two-thirds majority. This would mean another prolonged deadlock and eventually a compromise candidate, who would probably be beaten. The other reason is that if he remains neutral in the platform fight on this subject he would be vastly weakened as a candidate in the Wet states.

Post-convention declarations favoring repeal, or Wet telegrams explaining his personal Wetness, sent to the convention after the platform fight is over would not, I think, relieve him from the charge of pussyfooting on prohibition. The suspicion would be engendered that should he be elected, he might again be neutral when the test came in Congress. There is a certain amount of suspicion now as to the quality of his Wetness and there would be a feeling of distrust among the Wets toward a candidate who becomes vocal on this subject only after the fight is over.

Summing up the situation, it seems clear that what some of Roosevelt's advisers want him to do is to play to the Dry side in order to get the nomination and then play to the Wet side to get elected, it being certain that the South will not bolt a Wet candidate in the general election unless he also happens to be a Catholic. Personally, I do not think this plan of campaign for Governor Roosevelt, slick as it seems, will work out well. For one thing, as I have pointed out, it might easily prevent his nomination and, in any event, would diminish his chances in the election. For another, I do not believe Governor Roosevelt will agree to any such pussyfooting. I think that before the convention meets he will declare himself in favor of a repeal plank, not only because that is his personal conviction and the honest thing to do, but because it is clearly the best politics.

Washington. T. R. B.

Who Is Sylvia?

NOWADAYS in the United States no element does more to qualify, prohibit and inspire the expression of our life than do women. Their battle with mere American man is long since won; the war between the sexes interests us less than the chain stores or the financial depression. I have been away some six months, and returning to these shores so recently have not yet had time to find out what is being analyzed; but I know that whatever else it may be, it is not the psychological difference between male and female. If it were so, I should begin this note on Miss Gilder's book[1] with the remark that, of all the arts, none has proved to be so well suited to women as the theatre. Such a remark was long since a platitude, but is now idle; for no one is going to be fogey enough to doubt that there is any difference between a woman and a man in anything. Why should a woman not have the same right in the theatre as a man? Why indeed? I am less interested in what brings her to the theatre than in what she brings to it.

This book has doubtless its just number of defects, but I am poorly aware of them. For me it has only two faults. First there is a tendency—I am not sure whether it is feminine or precisely what it is—on Miss Gilder's part to be a little modest, shall we say, about the amount of her very real learning, the amplitude of her information and the scope of her theatrical understanding, which any old stager would detect on every page. Thackeray has a line in "Vanity Fair" about the gentler sex who, like the beasts of the field, he says, if they only knew their power, could quite destroy us. Miss Gilder is like that perhaps, perhaps not; at any rate the claws of her learning are frequently too hidden. My second complaint is perversely the contrary: I keep yearning for more femininity on the author's part which would keep her slapping us in the face with combative facts. We may take such a fact, for instance, as that Theodora, wife of the Emperor Justinian, father of laws, was an actress or public entertainer. Justinian made her joint ruler with him, and attributed his laws to her sage advice. Some of the harsh statutes against women of her profession were, in fact, annulled in order that she might be legally married—it was around 521 A. D. when "a

[1] Enter the Actress, by Rosamond Gilder. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company. 313 pages. $5.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glorious repentance" was left open "to the unhappy females who had prostituted their persons in the theatre." There are plenty of facts in "Enter the Actress" that challenge male enterprise, La Montansier's indirect lighting in the auditorium of her theatre, her management of stage crowds, Carolina Neuber's position at the head of the entire modern German theatre, Madame Vestris' contribution to the development of modern realism in setting, acting and directing, and so on and so on. There is the more profound relation of Madeleine Béjart, Molière's mistress, to the whole theatre of Molière, which drew so largely from her experience, talents and common sense, and which gave so much to the technique of the modern prose drama. These innovations and priorities of women in the development of the theatre are scattered through Miss Gilder's volume, and could have been turned into the most humiliating ammunition that feminism could desire. I am not saying, of course, that the book would have gained in nobility or solidity by such means, I am only saying that such feline salinity would sometimes have brightened the edge of the discussion.

Miss Gilder begins her account of the gradual entrance of women into all departments of the theatre—a struggle for rights that was not complete until the nineteenth century was almost over—with stating that purpose of the tenth-century German nun, Hrotsvitha, of glorifying the "laudable chastity of Christian virgins." This no doubt somewhat discouraging dramatic standard is offset, however, by the fact that the mysteries and sacred pageants of the Middle Ages presented women quite naked in such roles as Eve before the fall and the adoption of the fig leaf, and Bathsheba and Susanna taking their celebrated baths. But neither Hrotsvitha's lofty female martyrs nor these pure ladies from Scripture weighed much against the Church's attitude toward the theatre and especially toward women players; and the concern of "Enter the Actress" is the slow emergence here and there, through every avenue of repression, sham, backstairs, courage and genius, of women to their present full share in the theatre art. Among the subjects and chapters that contribute to this record are Isabella Andreini, Europe's prima-donna inamorata; Molière's Madeleine and Armande Béjart; the first English actresses, especially those of the Restoration epoch; the first professional woman playwright in England, Aphra Behn; the first pioneer manager, woman or man, in Germany, Carolina Neuber; Madame Vestris, the first lessee lady of the English stage; and La Montansier, the astonishing theatre directress, whose career lasted throughout the course of Marie Antoinette and the Revolution, and who died at ninety, spicy and still unfinished with the life of this world, having known every man in France worth knowing and many of them much too well. The chapter on La Montansier is the most brilliant and satisfactory in the book. There are two subjects implied in Miss Gilder's undertaking and constantly in her mind: the participation of women in the theatre of diverse epochs, and the extent to which the theatre in each instance is expressive of the epoch.

The glorification promised by Mr. Ziegfeld is not that purposed by Hrotsvitha. The theatre, as a young lady who is probably one of the deepest stage thinkers on East Fiftieth Street, New York, said once, the theatre will always be the theatre. And the Church did a great thing for female acting by making it a sin; there ensued a combination with our lower natures by which the higher got a better chance of frequency; which is to say that once men are drawn to attend the theatre, fine things can be conveyed to them. A fellow volume to Miss Gilder's could discuss women with regard to the esthetics of the theatre. The possibility of our modern realistic drama because of the presence of women players; the loss in the impersonal, the objective, the remote, as the drama becomes more intimate and literal, which it does partly through the agency and temperament of actresses; the shift in the drama's accent on sex that has both necessitated and followed the employment of women on the stage; and so on and so on, the points that would arise are numberless.

One point, here in America, might make us a final flash, drolly ironical. Everybody knows that our actresses are better than our actors, the women in our American theatre better than the men. We are accustomed to say that American actresses are better than the English, English actors better than the American. This, in so far as it is true at all, may be because our actresses have more freedom, dash, directness, less affectation and more chic, and English actors, compared to ours, are often more handsomely mannered and well spoken—sometimes—and more effectively exhibitionistic and more androgynous. At any rate the general feeling is that all the glamour, coquetry and childish allure of the stage are more engaging in a woman than in a man, to whom such pretty vanities are not so easily permitted; and the same might be said of the more voluble and throbbing emotions. You can say two things about this: If we have a theatre with no ideas, a theatre where the need is only to exhibit oneself and attract others, the female flourish shows a healthier and happier complexion than the male, the woman is only following what the social centuries have laid down for her. If it is only because the female is permitted more follies than the male, what becomes of the celebrated equality between the sexes? It still seems safe to say, notwithstanding, that beside a bad actor a bad actress is never such an ass.

STARK YOUNG.

Dreiser, Reluctant, in the Films

BITTER litigious strife between author and film producers invested the opening, at the Criterion Theatre, of the film play of "An American Tragedy" with a useful glow of publicity. The idea will not down among New York's cynics that the Paramount Company fairly welcomed Theodore Dreiser's unsuccessful suit for an injunction of their production. With its central theme a protracted criminal-court trial, the play itself became the subject of a trial, the public serving as jury.

It is a pity, therefore, that the issue between Theodore Dreiser and the gentlemen of the movie industry will probably remain obscure for the great public. At bottom it was a question of whether the quality and standard of a serious literary work, estimable despite its limitations, would be honestly rendered into terms of the motion picture. Delicate problems, of emphasis, selection, tempo, dramatic implication, are brought up, rather than the mere literal rendition of a work, page by page. Mr. Dreiser, perhaps, ingenuous and obstinate—though great things have been accomplished in such a spirit—protested that the social message of his novel had been distorted; that the drama of "an ordinary but weak youngster" who, through the vicissitudes of life, through the working of society, "over which he had no control," becomes involved step by step in a great tragedy, has been done into a mere murder story. The 840-page novel was designed as "an indictment of society." The brief film play, as produced by Josef von Sternberg, was well above the average of gangster talkies now selling on Main Street; but it was no more an intended indictment of society than the common tabloid serial.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Avoiding nearly all the social-economic biography which Dreiser ponderously accumulates and by means of which he wears down and overpowers the reader, the talking picture gallops immediately into the heart of the action. After several clean, snappy scenes from the early life and adventures of Clyde Griffiths—scenes which almost jerk by the spectator in their haste to get down to real business—the hero is quickly turned into a "mean, lecherous, designing" murderer, the suggestions for the disposal of his unfortunate mistress coming opportunely from the glimpse of a newspaper crime story. Thus Clyde is launched upon the long trial scene, now melodramatic, now quasi-humorous, which takes up half the play and which is confidently expected to make the box-offices hum. A few of the principals, it is true, Miss Sylvia Sidney as the pathetic Roberta, and Mr. Irving Pichel as a familiar, energetic type of district attorney, conduct themselves tolerably well before the camera and the sound machines; but the movements of Mr. Phillips Holmes, playing the all-important part of Clyde Griffiths, are too lethargic and unconvincing, too wanting in progression of any kind, to arouse the sympathy which Mr. Dreiser's thesis would have required for his central character. And what is most disturbing is that the photography under the gifted von Sternberg's direction is for the most part mediocre, whereas the peculiarly expressive atmospheric qualities of the motion picture at its best might have done much to carry over something of Dreiser's weighty ruminations. Only one or two speeches on the part of the youthful murderer's mother, lifted from the novel, and ineffectually "set" and delivered, serve as a weak attempt to convey the moral lesson that Clyde was really the victim of his social environment.

But what could Mr. Dreiser have expected of our movies? It would have been a miracle if an artistic and dignified tragedy had been created out of his novel. Such a miracle, Eric von Stroheim might have effected; since ten years ago, he produced in "Greed" (after Norris' "McTeague"), one of the greatest of silent pictures, a picture which in its massing of detail and atmospheric value really transcended the literary work, so similar to Dreiser's. But Stroheim would have taken several years and several hundred reels; moreover, his huge silent picture was a commercial failure; and so the financiers who run the pleasure industry won't have him.

Mr. Dreiser has lost his injunction suit; and the great American cinema audience may make nothing of his plea. But if other writers "would stand up," as Mr. Otto Kahn has observed, for the dignity of their work, "we might expect to get somewhere in having the movies pulled out of their rut."

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Plays for Workers

SIR: Several dramatic groups in New York City, namely: the Young Circle League of the Workmen's Circle, the Young People's Socialist League, the Rand School, various groups of the Socialist party and the labor unions, several Negro dramatic groups of Harlem, Brookwood Labor College, have banded together to form the Workers' Theatre in order to carry out a two-fold purpose. The first is to reach a working-class audience that is unapproachable by the commercial theatre; and to impart to that audience a definite message of a class-conscious social ideal. The second is to produce plays with the aid of those young men and women who as amateurs are anxious to express their social philosophy in a true dramatic form.

Toward this end we are in need of all types of labor plays. Will those people who possess or who know of such plays please communicate with me? We should also like to hear from other labor dramatic groups throughout the country. We hope, in due time, to be able to coördinate the work of these groups and to form a nation-wide movement of Workers' Theatres.

SAMUEL A. ROTHENBERG,
Secretary, Workers' Theatre.

7 East Fifteenth Street.
New York City.

More Third Party Rumblings

SIR: With the observation that it cost the Republicans $8,000,000 in 1920, $6,500,000 in 1924, and $9,000,000 in 1928 to keep the party trademark upon the White House, we pass over the fascinating question of who is to own the new party proposed by Doctor Dewey in a recent series of articles in The New Republic. Just who might lead another party need not concern us greatly, for the leader is said to be furnished with the crisis that gives birth to the party. Is there some great divisive issue today that needs better nurture than it has been getting? A new party must have issues—worse than that, it must limit the fight to one single issue if possible. Are the two present parties divergent enough to exclude another party?

One test of the real significance of a party is how its disciples act in Congress. If there is a high degree of cohesion within a party on any issue or group of issues, we suspect party affiliation has influenced the vote. In a study of issues in the last four Congresses, it has been found that the parties took opposite sides in one-third of the roll calls. When the issues voted on were divided into ten groups according to subject matter—prohibition, agriculture, taxation, etc.—it was shown that party cohesion was rather high. In only two cases out of a possible twenty did either party have a cohesion of less than 46 percent, which is equal to an eleven to four vote.

It is pointed out that in two-thirds of the questions, parties stand for exactly the same principles. The same sacred interests control the machinery of both. The new party could take these remnant issues, or one of them. Politically, both Republicans and Democrats have been in favor of prohibition. There is a burning issue, perhaps, but not quite hot enough to put the third party over. Then there are the issues involving business. The Democrats show little cohesion on the subject, although Republicans are not thus embarrassed. Another party might squarely oppose this school of "rugged individualism". . . . To carry all the leftover issues that are offered would make of the prospective party a top-heavy omnibus. To carry only one would cause it to suffer the unbearable fate of being ignored. . . . Present-day issues in a new party cannot overcome our hereditary allegiances. We aren't carrying any second spare party any more than we carry a second spare tire. We can't afford it, or think we can't.

Columbus, Ohio. DONALD HECOCK.

Industrial Stabilization

SIR: Within the short space of an article it would be ridiculous to expect George Soule to do more than sketch the main form and function of an "economic brain." But nevertheless his discussion of industrial stabilization should not have omitted, in my opinion, the paramount necessity of stabilizing the value of the units upon which financial obligations are entered into and by which payments for goods and services are made.

If his $5,000-a-year-minimum income is to have any meaning it should not be as inconstant as the variations in the general price level of the last decade have made it. Again, the intelligent control of the national surplus in the form of investments is as urgent as he states, but such control would be very difficult to apply if a dollar invested in one year buys only half a dollar's worth when it is returned ten years later; that is not investment but robbery of the investor by society. Similarly the dollar when returned should not have added to its value the 20 percent which the Germans, British and others must add when they pay their debts now to either the government or the citizens of this country.

WALTER J. MILLARD.

Philadelphia, Pa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Taste and Dr. Johnson

London: a Poem, and The Vanity of Human Wishes, by Samuel Johnson. With an Introductory Essay by T. S. Eliot. London: Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald. Limited edition of 450 copies of which 150 are signed by Mr. Eliot.

IN THE last ten years we have heard rumors of a revival of eighteenth-century poetry, amid rumors of a revival of the age of Donne. Whether either revival is at hand or is still to come we do not know. We do know that certain poets of the eighteenth century have never been neglected, even to this day, and we know that it is a mistake to assume that one must admire Collins because one admires Crabbe. The eighteenth century is as varied as any other. Mr. T. S. Eliot, in the preface to a beautiful edition of "London" and "The Vanity of Human Wishes," argues this fact conclusively. It is a fallacy, born of distance, to believe that verse from Dryden to Goldsmith maintains a uniformity of style and feeling. Both Churchill and Pope wrote couplets and satire; they are as different as Aiken and Robinson. Mr. Eliot has, in a sense, revived Johnson's two most distinguished poems, but to have done so is not to have revived eighteenth-century poetry. Nor has he the slightest illusion that he has done so. This handsome volume will please collectors, without in the least affecting what used to be called the "public taste."

A taste is a more or less single-minded preference whose exercise lasts long enough to give a definite character to the intellectual habits of a people. Our public has no single mind for reading, no preference that is capable of maturing or is allowed to mature longer than a very few years. We have no public taste. Many books are read, or so one infers from the thousands of books published. In the "depression" of the book market perhaps three times as many books are sold as in the 'fifties, when a small but highly cultivated public in New England and the South possessed a genuine taste. There was not much critical evaluation of literature, but there was a great deal of excellent expository criticism reflecting an intense interest in the subject-matter of books. The public was innocent of modern advertising and was allowed to select and read its books at leisure.

The power of popular selection, which once influenced critical opinion and thus, in the time of the great British quarterlies, formed the background of literary judgment—good and bad—has ceased to be exercised. For the passive appetite that can take in "John Brown's Body," "The Buck in the Snow," "Tristram" and "The Anthology of World Poetry," all within two years, is a little too docile and miscellaneous to be called a taste at all. It was bad taste that made the British pubic buy thousands of copies of "Lalla Rookh"; it was taste nevertheless, powerful, single-minded, rooted in the settled opinions of society. It was restless curiosity that drove the American public to consume, perhaps to read, about two hundred thousand copies of "The Bridge of San Luis Rey"—which is a more respectable work than "Lalla Rookh." The public does not know what it wants; the publishers, as well as the writers, who must keep before them at least a ghostly public in order to write a sentence, cannot know either. The public can be sold anything, but nobody knows what it is. It is reasonable to suppose that the "people" care little what they get so long as they are able to buy.

Now this state of letters is largely due to the decline of literary education. (Professor Babbitt would attribute it to the decline of "ethical" standards, which may be so; but since it is not necessary to assume what may very well be true, that a dog has a soul, in order to discuss the dog's conduct, I speak merely of the decline of literary or humane education.) It is also due to the intensive literary cultivation of a few men who by the very act of taking up the profession of letters exile themselves from society. The literary sense is no longer a spontaneous outgrowth of the attitude of society, or an instrument of social solidarity. It is no longer a comprehension of differences, but a record of them. Since the public does not know what it wants, the writers withdraw to a private world, whose geography often exhibits enough of the humanistic, literary education of the past to render it mysterious to contemporary society. Our educated public regrets that it cannot understand the poetry of Hart Crane: it had better discharge the prior obligation to understand Blake or Donne. But on the whole our authors are left free to range over the entire realm of literature, and thus to follow actively the more passive eclecticism of the society from which they have withdrawn. A literary artist is always, perhaps, limited in this sense by his society, and although he may find a style that permits him to achieve a "criticism" of it, although he may philosophically oppose with certain traditional values the prevailing values of men, he nevertheless, participates in their temper to the extent that he must live within their social and spiritual forms. An example of the material inevitability of social pressure is Mr. John Crowe Ransom's powerful defense of religious orthodoxy, which is somewhat embarrassed by his critical awareness that orthodoxy nowhere exists in a form acceptable to modern men.

So, for this reason, a revival of any period of the literature of the past is likely to be crippled at the outset: all periods are the more nearly dead as they recede from the year 1914. Critics are still able to share Charles Lamb's surprise that the contemporaries of Shakespeare had been neglected for a century and a half. It is pleasant to remember that the eighteenth century had a very inefficient academic technique; but neither this nor that century's belief in its own superior elegance quite explains the cause of Lamb's surprise. It is rather that the kind of culture that flowered in England after the Restoration, declining by the middle of the next century, had no need of Massinger, Marston and Tourneur. Every age has a special intellectual outlook that attracts to it only those features of the past that it requires. Our own age looks chiefly to its heritage of mechanics, which before 1800 was very thin; and it needs but little of the literary past.

However, our busy academic life has recently accumulated more knowledge, more eclectic information, of the literature of all places and times than Warburton and Theobald ever heard of; and yet we are more ignorant than they. Our motives for literary study, as Professor Foerster has shown, are directed by no central impulse. Though our most modest doctor of philosophy knows more about the battle of Blenheim than Addison knew, he is not fatally upset by the disconcerting fact that Addison wrote a distinguished poem about it. His own concern is for the facts, whether they mean anything to him or not; and they usually do not. We are more ignorant than Theobald and Addison because we are ignorant of our own destiny when this is imagined apart from the immense physical organization of life which is industrialism.

Mr. Eliot's edition of Johnson and his valuable essay on eighteenth-century poetry are notable examples of our modern eclecticism, of the critical intelligence engaged

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

upon a private enterprise. Mr. Eliot understands Johnson's kind of poetry, but, because the public does not need what Johnson has to offer it, "London" and "The Vanity of Human Wishes" are not likely to win new readers. The reasons for this Mr. Eliot himself admirably sets forth:

> Those who demand of poetry a day dream, or a metamorphosis of their own feeble desires and lusts, or what they believe to be the "intensity" of passion, will not find much in Johnson. He is like Pope and Dryden, Crabbe and Landor, a poet for those who want poetry and not something else, some stay for their own vanity. I sometimes think that our own time, with its elaborate equipment of science and psychological analysis, is even less fitted than the Victorian age to appreciate poetry as poetry.

These are all "romantic," or what is the same thing, scientific reasons for the steady decline of Johnson's reputation as a poet. It might do the Humanists good to ponder them from a new point of view. For it is only through the exercise of a kind of romanticism, through the cultivation of a sensibility which, from the viewpoint of the prevailing values, is both unsocial and strange, that Mr. Eliot is able to recover the meaning of one of the great classicists and humanists of English literature. The divided mind of the Humanists which at one moment prompts them to abuse modern society and, at the next, to proceed on a make-believe assumption that this society must not, at its very base, be changed—an imitation of the classical acceptance of the social order as final—of this divided mind they are peculiarly the victims, for they are trying to stand on both horns of a dilemma at once. The space between the horns widens until they collapse in the middle ground. We cannot have a classical attitude in perfection without a classical society. The Humanists are, I believe, our only men of letters who are not reconciled to this ineluctable fact.

The situation that I have described deserves analysis, but here I must limit myself to its significance for literary taste. We cannot pretend that society as it now exists requires unadulterated the kind of poetry that Johnson wrote. We cannot pretend, with the estimable Humanists, simply because we wish it, that our society has a taste that can instinctively draw to itself an art whose moral implications it has no use for. Nor will the most determined literary revival, however literary and determined, affect the order of society, which is the origin of taste. Driven by a powerful scientific conviction, which is largely unconscious, the public will read poetry at random, to satisfy its undisciplined craving for sensation. It will devour sensation indiscriminately—eclectically. And I believe that Mr. Eliot is right in asserting that to read poetry for this purpose is not to read it at all.

He is certainly right in claiming Johnson for what Arnold called a "touchstone to poetry." If we cannot see the poetry in "The Vanity of Human Wishes," possibly we see it in other poems because we first see it there through the impure medium of something else that we need—an indulgence of personal sentiment or an extension of our own limited field of sensation. The poetry slips in at the side door; either it is welcome or we kick it out. In these lines there is nothing but poetry, and I doubt if in this age there can be much enthusiasm for them:

> New sorrow rises as the day returns,
> A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
> Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,
> Now lacerated friendship claims a tear.
> Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
> Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;
> New Forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
> Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,
> Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
> And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

To write poetry so precise, lucid and pure, one must be what the Southern Negro calls a *settled* person; one must be mature; one must live in a world that offers the least evidence of the ceaseless social change. One must not be distracted by too much speculation, or lost in the mutability of sensation. One's mind must be made up: such a poet will have taste. The more precise the writing, the purer the poetry. I do not know what poetry is as an essence, but it is clear that Johnson, some of Pope, a great deal of Dryden and Landor, are pure poetry. Nor do I know what pure poetry is; and yet I am convinced that it is safer to claim most of the eighteenth century for *pure poetry* than to isolate a few qualities of the English romantics which are shared by the French Symbolists, which are continued by Mr. Hart Crane, and which are best described as *pure sensation,* and to call them pure poetry. Our equivalent for taste is sensation. But that part of Johnson which is not poetry is nothing, nor does it pretend to be. This is what one should expect from him whose honesty and intelligence, as well as whose precision of style, we should do well to cultivate.

ALLEN TATE.

New Russian Gods

The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea, by Boris Pilnyak. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. $2.50.

THE PROLETARIAN revolution began in a country that had almost no proletariat; the dreamy, self-dramatizing Russian has made a god of the machine, of steel and oil, assembly line and mass production. The revolution is a fact, the Five Year Plan is on the threshold of success, and it is possible to conceive of a great dam, with deep canals and tremendous spillways, that could deflect even the Volga, making it flow into that vast lake called the Caspian Sea, turning the desert green, changing the outline of the sea, the contours of the Caucasus, the map of Eastern Europe. . . .

Pilnyak's book is perhaps the first objective Russian novel written since the revolution, simplifying and straightening the involved, tangled trends of life in his country. It is fiction, since the characters are imagined; but it is true because the environment it paints is symptomatic, and because its characters not only might, but inevitably would act as is described.

Gogol, Dostoievsky, Chekhov and Gorky; now Pilnyak. Out of humorous skepticism, through a period of disenchantment and canonizing of idiots into saints and Christs; through sheer inertia, then tragic revolution, to the Five Year Plan, with its ruthless materialism, and its salvos for collectivism. We have changed. There is no God! And we shall ache no more because we do not know the destiny of man; instead we shall provide for us a higher living standard.

Mais plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. There was always a God in Russia. He was Holy Russia (Dostoievsky), or Chaos (Andreyev), or Love (Tolstoy). Today He is Lenin, or the Five Year Plan, or a certain dam across a certain river. He is God because logic springs

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from Him; and readjustment, compromise, the daily rubbing off of colors, is as nothing before the ferocity of man's faith in Him. In Pilnyak's book, the building of the dam becomes like the building of the Chartres Cathedral during the Middle Ages—an expression of faith. Before the dam was, nothing was; and before men gathered to build it they did not exist. They live with it by day, and their rest at night is sacrificed to it. These men are engineers, machinists, unskilled workers, here today, halfway across Russia tomorrow. What is the dam to them?

It is God to them. When the women workers strike in protest at injustice that has caused the death of the wife of an engineer, the smell of heresy rises in the air; the quiet is almost as of the end of the world. But to strike is to wreck the Plan; and if this Plan of theirs should fail, what can they do? The answer is that there is nothing they can do; for when at the end of the book the dam is almost blown up by foreign-paid saboteurs, when only a miracle can save it . . . the miracle takes place, the conspirators kill one another. God can make miracles; else He would not be God, and men would not believe in Him.

It is not for a higher living standard that they are working, nor for an equal division of the fruits of labor, but for the glory of a new deity, awful, just and avenging. The natives of Sodom and Gomorrah, consumed by wrathful fire, were not more terribly punished than are the children of Moscow. Since the new God is just and logical, the men who worship Him must govern themselves by a dogmatic code of ethics; they judge others as black or white, heroes or villains, believers or atheists. At the end of the book the enemies of socialism and even those who are negligent in following its code, perish, as they must, because there is no room for them in the column that marches to glory. Militant Russia is marching toward a single-track destiny, whipping itself into discipline by a stern, blind justice. If the end should prove not worthy of the means, what awful Dostoievsky will rise with a chant of new despair?

NATHAN ASCH.

And Now Southern Industrialism

When Southern Labor Stirs, by Tom Tippett. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 348 pages. $2.50.

Labor and Textiles, by Robert W. Dunn and Jack Hardy. New York: International Publishers. 256 pages. $2.

THESE books write a *mene, mene* for the trade-union and revolutionary theorist, for the social historian, and for the layman who keeps his ear cocked for thunder on the left. In the first, done by a Brookwood instructor at the expense of the Guggenheim Foundation, four recent Southern textile strikes are reported and analyzed, and the story is not only significant as labor history, but speaks eloquently of the drift of the South from an agrarian to an industrial society.

Five thousand mountaineers working at the Bemberg-Glanzstoff rayon mills in Elizabethton, Tennessee, struck in March, 1929, against conditions under which 500 girls in one department worked fifty-five hours a week for an average wage of $8.96. On request, the United Textile Workers supplied organizers, and both plants walked out. The courts issued injunctions nullifying every constitutional guarantee; the Governor sent 800 militiamen; pickets were jailed in carloads; the streets bristled with bayonets. In addition to the state's display of force, the United Textile Workers lacked funds for relief and the American Federation of Labor supplied none. Moreover, there was no adequate strike machinery—no relief unit, no legal or publicity staff. Leaders came and went. Defeat became obvious when a federal labor conciliator persuaded the union and the workers into an agreement whereby the company promised merely to hear employees on grievances, with the final "impartial" arbitrator to be its own personnel officer. The union did no effective post-strike work; the Workers' Education Bureau sent an operative who, after a brief stay, vanished without explanation; the mills installed a flourishing company union. "Underlying the defeat," Tippett concludes, "was the . . . indifference and tragic impotence of the American labor movement."

Meanwhile in Gastonia, North Carolina, the Communist-led National Textile Workers' Union was dealing differently with workers similarly desperate. Its organizers had been in the factory long before the walkout. When it came, their strike set-up was on the job, with trained leaders handling relief, legal work and publicity. Only their strike fund was inadequate. At first they didn't talk Communism, but used "straight" trade-union tactics. But their Communism was exposed and admitted. The press and the employers, helped out materially by the pronouncements of the American Federation of Labor, played upon the prejudices of the workers to alienate them from the Communists. Anti-communist feeling among the middle class allowed official and mob violence to run riot against the strike leaders. Then the leadership began to waver between building a radical trade union and propagating Communism. Communist ideology itself seemed to veer so that leaders were deposed and replaced. The workers became confused and were finally ripe to be turned against the Communists. Popular feeling against Communism ran so high that the union was forced completely underground. The Manville-Jenckes mill still runs a twelve-hour shift, at reduced wages.

Only three-score shots were needed to kill six pickets and wound thirty others at Marion, North Carolina, on October 1, 1930. In the words of the mill-owner, it was damn good shooting—good enough to break the strike which his duplicity had precipitated on the eve of a conference. The United Textile Workers were in command, and as at Elizabethton, lacked money, organization and real support from the A. F. of L. Extra-union relief agencies came to the scene to help, but there was no unified control and no responsible officer representing the union. How the sheriff and his drunken deputies were whitewashed after the shooting is well known. But the strike was broken and the magnificent spirit of the workers allowed to decay by the neglectful post-strike vacillation of the union.

But labor's worst defeat was suffered at Danville, Virginia, last fall and winter, despite well knit strike machinery and favorable public sentiment. Again it was the failure of the A. F. of L. to feed the starving strikers which hastened defeat. Troops and injunctions did the rest. Ignominiously the union called off the strike with the statement that since workers were being taken back (while the strike was still on) without their union affiliation being questioned, the right of union membership had been established, and the strike had achieved its purpose. This weak effort to mask defeat plunged the Danville workers into confusion and mistrust because it condoned unionists' scabbing on their own strike. The local press exposed it as treachery "to let the strike down easy for the professional labor people." The American labor movement had added hypocrisy to failure.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Four times workers new to unionism had risen in whatever might they could muster and spent themselves utterly. In that effort lay their only but not inconsiderable victory. Four times they went down to crushing defeat, beaten as much by their own leadership as by the injunctions, bullets and bayonets of the boss. But as Tippett points out, the bullets and bayonets are traditional. The tragedy is that the spontaneous mass-rising of the Southern workers should have been as of a voice crying in the wilderness.

Tippett's tale is graphic and his analysis objective and shrewd. He appears naïve only when he seems to assume that the American Federation of Labor (which he shows to be incompetent and uninterested) must be the answer to the Southern worker's prayer.

Messrs. Dunn and Hardy, writing from the Left camp of the Labor Research Association, treat the Southern situation as an aspect of the international textile industry. Their book is as much concerned with cottons as it is with woollens, and explores thoroughly the economic and technological conditions of the present "crisis" in those fields. The textile capitalist's wail about mills running at a loss is tellingly exposed as a bookkeeper's fiction resulting from almost incredible stock-watering operations of the past twenty years. Many mills which have alleged operating losses are shown to have earned rich profits on the actual paid-in capitalization.

Tracing the worker's status in the textile field in relation to imperialism, "rationalization," false capitalization, so-called "American" trade unionism and its sorry fruits, Dunn and Hardy come finally to their main thesis: the formation of a radical industrial trade union based ideologically upon the principle of the class struggle, and structurally upon the factory unit rather than the craft unit. And they conclude that "of course" it should be affiliated with the Red International of Trade Unions through its local branch, the Trade Union Unity League. In short: join the National Textile Workers' Union.

Well, maybe. To one sick of the Federation's four-flushing and ready to believe that a radical trade union based upon the class struggle is a necessity, this exhortation should have a stirring ring. But it hasn't, partly because Dunn and Hardy have not handled their argument to make that conclusion seem inevitable; and partly because Gastonia hinted that there was something wrong besides lack of money, and that that something smacked mightily of an inept ideological absentee-landlordism.

WINCHELL TAYLOR.

The Scientist and His Soul

Science and Religion: a Symposium, with a foreward by Michael Pupin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 175 pages. $1.75.

THIS SYMPOSIUM by twelve British scientists, clergymen and philosophers, is stimulating and suggestive, particularly to the intelligent reader who cares to read between the lines. The British Broadcasting Corporation, which took the initiative in organizing this presentation of views as a series of radio talks, is to be congratulated on its efforts.

The chief difficulty in handling a theme of this sort through talks by representative leaders is the invitation to polite compromise. It has not altogether been avoided by the participants in the present symposium, and Dean Inge is right when he protests in his paper against the easy assumption that there is no conflict between science and religion inasmuch as they occupy separate fields. After all, the problem of science and religion is not one of a peace conference between two vested interests. The modern individual may often find himself torn between an intellectual acceptance of science and an emotional pull to traditional religion; but what he is looking for is not a formula to justify both loyalties, but a unified world outlook capable of providing him with a unity of spiritual energies.

From this point of view, the best approach is the philosophical one without fixed commitments on either side. This is represented in the symposium by the articles of J. S. Haldane and Samuel Alexander. The philosophical views of both these thinkers are familiar to American readers. Professor Haldane is looking for an idealistic interpretation of reality which accepts science without materialism and accepts what he regards as the heart of religion without the supernatural. I do not think he has ever worked out clearly the full implications of his views, but his work does represent an effort at whole-hearted thinking on this problem. On the other hand, Professor Alexander's doctrine of emergent evolution is, like all realistic efforts to incorporate values into the physical universe, a rather thin and abstract construction. He is, however, right in his main contention that if religion is to have a place in the world it cannot live in a compartment so isolated that the scientist may completely ignore its presence in the course of his scientific work.

On the scientific side the most irritating essay is that of Sir Arthur Eddington. The underlying tone of the essay is the superiority of the intuitions of the heart over the clumsy construction of scientific logic. At the same time Sir Arthur is at pains to utilize all the latest developments of physics, such as relativity and the principle of indeterminacy, as arguments in support of religion, so that the total effect of his paper is a jumble of sophistry, from which nothing stands out clearly except the desire to defend traditional religion. Fragmentary philosophic ideas are thrown out in all directions, but there is evidently lacking a will to come to grips with the basic question. It is, of course, nonsense to talk of clumsiness of reasoning and logic when it comes to treating such subtle questions as religion. Reasoning is always clumsy—until it is perfected to take into account the discrepancies and remainders that it leaves out in the first approximation. Basically it is no more difficult to reason out a philosophy adequate to the total demands of human experience than to construct a theory like Einsteinian relativity. The obstacles do not come from the deficiency of human reason, but from reservations about putting the secret phases of our experience fully on the table and operating upon them with logical disinterestedness.

This emotional reluctance is, of course, greatly fortified by the institutional organization of religion and by the quasi-institutionalism of science. As may be seen from some of the essays in the book, it is not in the interest of organized religion to leave the intellect free to find its own total truth. Nor is it especially in the interest of science to pursue too strenuously a total truth so long as it is assured of freedom in its own domain. In other words, the quarrel of science and religion will continue as long as neither body of doctrine is organized to face the problem of an integral philosophy of experience; and as long as things are so organized the sensitive individual will get no spiritual comfort from the dogmatic claims of either —still less from the reconciliations attempted in their party names.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Book Notes

Biography

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, by Walter F. McCaleb. *New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 383 pages. $4.*

Gilson Gardner—who knew Teddy well—says that Roosevelt kept himself an "economic imbecile" in order to remain in politics. Lincoln Steffens—who observed Teddy shrewdly—says "Roosevelt had no economics." Walter McCaleb, without ever putting the matter so explicitly, more or less demonstrates the truth of the Gardner and Steffens allegations in this biography which, on two counts, is the best that has appeared to date. The two counts that lift it above the work of Bishop, Thayer, Charnwood and Wister are in the matter of the Panama episode and the so-called "bankers' panic" of 1907, when the Morgan-Frick crowd literally double-crossed Roosevelt in order to gain control of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company. In the matter of the "rape of Panama," long a reproach to the Roosevelt who took such a high moral tone in condemning the "rape of Belgium," Dr. McCaleb offers the most complete account to date—an account quite evidently based on patient and laborious spade work, with evidence to support him at all points. The deficiencies of the biography obtrude in Dr. McCaleb's sketchy discussion of Roosevelt's foreign policy, and his very uncritical section devoted to the part Roosevelt played in rousing the United States to enter the World War. In this last he is very unfair to Woodrow Wilson

CLEOPATRA, A Royal Voluptuary, by Oskar von Wertheimer. Translated by Huntley Patterson. *Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 326 pages. $5.*

The subtitle of this book indicates an attempt to catch the fancy with a strip-and-teaser performance, but the promise is very half-heartedly kept. The volume is sober enough, but without distinction; it is either poorly written in the original or badly managed in translation. Arthur Weigall's biography, which Herr von Wertheimer dismisses in his preface with considerably less than its due, remains our most satisfactory interpretation of the last of the Ptolemies.

Fiction

A FAREWELL TO INDIA, by Edward Thompson. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.*

Mr. Thompson represents the most enlightened and sympathetic attitude of Englishmen who have served in India toward the country of their wardship. His "Reconstruction of India" was a plea for mutual understanding, and the preservation by an independent India, within the Empire, of the benefits of British occupation. "An Indian Day" is a delightful and illuminating picture of the relation between the two races in their enforced cohabitation. "A Farewell to India" continues the story of high-minded British rulers and teachers trying to deal with a situation in which the anomalous has become the impossible. The tone is sharper than in the earlier volume; the gentle amusement with which the Englishman habitually contemplates India has changed to irony, which does not spare the meretricious Western culture imposed so thinly on an ancient people of the East. The devoted educational and missionary efforts of Alden, Douglas and Findlay, are derisory in the light of the wisdom of Jayananda, the Sadhu. The Anglo-Indian scene which glowed warmly in the sunset colors of "An Indian Day" is now touched with twilight and frost. It is time for the "Farewell to India."

FOUR IN FAMILY, by Humphrey Pakington. *New York: W. W. Norton and Company. $2.*

Four young people and their parents procure themselves a country home in Severnshire, and indulge themselves, with wholesome courtships on the side, in the usual pastime of well bred country life. This is the whole story, and only once does it break through into the upper levels of significance, when the oldest daughter remarks, "We're all quite intelligent, but we just frivol around. We come down to the country intending to strike out our own line, and what happens? Tennis at the Eaton-Shrubsoles'; Young People's Literary League with Auntie Sue; garden thrown open to the Conservative Party." Country atmosphere is amusingly detailed, and Mr. Pakington lights up dreary snobs, bishops, deans and gossips, with a choice humor, somewhat reminiscent of Trollope, yet even more deft.

DEEP EVENING, by Eugene Löhrke. *New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.*

Around a plot that is something of a *tour-de-force,* Mr. Löhrke constructs an entertaining novel which puts no strain on his obvious talent for fiction. The "Glamorland" strikes an iceberg in mid-Atlantic and founders. In the three hours that elapse between the collision and the sinking, the author exploits a group of characters ranging from able seaman, through waiter, financier, army major, legionnaire, manufacturer and a sprinkling of ladies; and attempts to erect a document of wider significance than a mere report of the extirpation of a casual handful of individuals.

GOD IN THE STRAW PEN, by John Fort. *New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.*

Against the stark background of a Georgia hill village in the 1830's, Mr Fort has assembled a group of vigorous characters. Isham Lowe and John Semple, itinerant Methodist preachers, arrive at Ryall Springs for a religious revival. The villagers' hysterical reaction to their impassioned evangelism and the fundamental conflict between the two preachers make a story of extraordinary power and interest. Particularly fine are the vignettes of the villagers and the frenzied scene in the crude straw-pen confessional.

Contributors

Charles A. Beard, noted historian and political scientist, who now describes himself as "a Connecticut farmer," has written several works on history and politics, the most recent being "The American Leviathan: the Republic in the Machine Age," which he wrote in collaboration with William Beard, his son. He was adviser to the Home Minister of Japan after the earthquake and fire in 1923.

Helen Cornelius is a young American poet who has lived for several years in France.

H. N. Brailsford, the well known British journalist contributes frequent economic and political articles to magazines in this country and in England.

John T. Flynn, former managing editor of The New York Evening Globe, is the author of "Investment Trusts Gone Wrong!" published in The New Republic Dollar Series.

W. B. Curry, who was formerly headmaster of the Oak Lane Country Day School in Philadelphia, is now Director of Education at Dartington Hall, Totnes, England.

Allen Tate, biographer, critic and poet is finishing a life of Robert E. Lee for fall publication and will issue a second volume of poetry in the early spring.

Nathan Asch whose novels "The Office," and "Pay Day" have been translated into Russian, German, Czechoslovakian and several other languages is at present living in Texas.

Winchell Taylor who has worked for the Fairchild Publications and the American Civil Liberties Union is at present on the editorial staff of The New Yorker.

Benjamin Ginzburg is a free-lance writer on philosophy and science. He is the author of "The Adventure of Science," and is now working on a book on ethics and social theory.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RESORTS

PLAY AROUND

AT CAMP TAMIMENT

Most Complete Playground for Adults

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: Dancing, Dramatics, vaudeville, and chamber music by Tamiment String Quartet. Special guest artist for week-end (Aug. 9) Harry Losse, dancer; for week-end (Aug. 16) Asya Dalskaya and Ura Istomin, in Russian and gyspy songs.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES: 15 Tennis Courts, 6 Handball Courts, 100 boats and canoes, swimming, golf, etc. All Sports Tournament Week.

INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES: Rand School Sunset Lectures. Week-end (Aug. 10) Louis Waldman, "Censorship"; (Aug. 17) V. F. Calverton, "Development of American Literature."

CAMP TAMIMENT

Forest Park Penna.
Phone Bushkill 2R2 N. Y. Phone ALg. 4-6875

Ask for Special Excursion rate at Hoboken Ticket Office

The Camp for Moderns

GREEN MANSIONS

Warrensburg, N. Y.

The Most Complete Adult Camp In the Adirondacks Private Golf Course

Booklet on Request

Tel. Chestertown 37. City: Chickering 4-1345 *Write for booklet.*
LENA BARISH *Directors* SAM GARLEN

BOOK BARGAINS

We have in stock one or more copies of the books listed below, unused and showing almost no shelf wear.

	Our Price
SEVEN IRON MEN, by Paul de Kruif. Harcourt. List $3.00	$1.50
MONT-ORIOL, by Guy de Maupassant. Boxed. Brentano's. List $2.50	1.25
GENESIS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE U. S. A., by Breckinridge Long. Macmillan. List $2.50	1.25
GO SHE MUST, by David Garnett. Knopf. List $2.50	1.00
NATIVES OF ROCK, by Glenway Wescott. XX Poems with decorations by Pamela Bianco. Numbered copies, boxed. Francesco Bianco. List $7.50	3.75
TRAIL MAKERS OF THE MIDDLE BORDER, by Hamlin Garland. Macmillan. List $2.50	1.25
AMERICA, by Hendrik Van Loon. Liveright. List $5.00	2.50
THE PRAIRIE AND THE MAKING OF MIDDLE AMERICA, by Dorothy Anne Dondore. Torch. List $4.50	2.00

Postage Free

NEW REPUBLIC BOOKSTORE
419 West 21st Street New York City

SCHOOL

Beacon Hill School

Harting, Petersfield, England
BERTRAND & DORA RUSSELL

Applies modern knowledge in diet, teaching methods and psychology. Vacancies this autumn for children from 2 up to and including 11 years. Address enquiries Principal.

RESORTS

Enjoy Provincetown's bright blue days, Cape Cod's most picturesque art colony. Offering attractive rooms and good food in charming old house near Harbour. $25.00 weekly.

ANN CRATON
22 Pearl Street, Provincetown, Mass.

FOR SALE

BETHLEHEM COUNTRY CLUB
Bethlehem Connecticut

On beautiful private lake, all athletic and water sports, dancing, golf nearby. Farm produce. Reasonable special Fourth of July week-end rate. Jewish Clientele. Booklet. Telephone: Woodbury, Conn. 48, Ring 2.

POSITIONS WANTED

Teacher from fashionable boarding-school must have immediate employment. Can act in many capacities; tutor, chaperone, guardian; travel anywhere; 45. Address: Box 613, The New Republic.

Young M. A., married, advertising, college teaching experience, wishes secretarial or any other position, anywhere. Adaptable, willing, good recommendations. Available at once. Write W. G., 2895 Webster Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

Columbia Student wants position as governess, nurse-maid, traveling companion, or tutor of mathematics. Refined and educated young woman. Excellent references. Address: Box 615, The New Republic.

LANGUAGES

FRENCH, SPANISH,

ITALIAN, GERMAN, RUSSIAN

Conversational method. Native teachers. Private lessons, 75c, short course, 9 to 9 daily, 18th year.

FISHER'S SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES
1264 Lexington Avenue, N. W. Cor. 85th St.

FOR RENT

CALIFORNIA: Furnished house for rent in Napa County, three hours by auto from San Francisco. Large lawn and garden with twenty acres of wooded mountain land. Ten rooms, all modern conveniences. $150 a month. W. W. Lyman, R. F. D., St. Helena, California.

FARMS FOR SALE

Farms, 25 to 150 acres, early Colonial stone houses and stone barns, Pennsylvania Dutch section, Erwinna-on-the-Deleware, 70 to 75 miles from New York. Beautiful hill country; wooded; streams. Price, $2,000 to $7,500. Terms. Address, John Coffey, Erwinna, Pa.

GENERAL

REAL HARRIS TWEED

The aristocrat of all outdoor wears —direct from makers. Sample free. Suit-lengths by mail. Carriage Paid.

JAMES St. TWEED DEPOT
159 Stornoway, Scotland.

BOOKS

UNUSUAL BOOKS

Privately printed limited editions. Unexpurgated translations. Unusually illustrated volumes. Curiosa and Esoterica.

Send for Fascinating FREE Catalogues

THE FALSTAFF PRESS
Dept. R.
489 Fifth Ave., New York

HOUSE TO SUBLET

Beautiful, secluded, studio house to sublet in "The Brocken," 32 miles from City by Sylvan Boulevard: 6 miles from West Shore R.R. at Haverstraw. Privilege of renewal after four months for a year. Furnished and equipped for living and working. Living-room with fireplace and fine library; two bed-rooms and guest nook, bath, kitchen with bottled gas. Telephone. Working space, 26 by 35, with 20 ft. ceiling and north light. References required. Mowbray-Clarke, New City, N. Y. Tel. 288R.

FOR SALE

Near Peekskill and Lake. Good commuting. All year round estate—24 acres. Fine early American Farmhouse, excellent condition; 3 fireplaces, 11 rooms, 2 baths, delightful attic of 6 rooms; situated on a knoll surrounded by sloping lawns—beautiful old trees, shrubberies, fruit trees, vegetable garden, gardener's cottage, barns, chicken houses, cow and horse stalls, garage. Beautiful surrounding country—must be seen to be appreciated. Can also be used to advantage as a high class inn. For quick sale, at $25,000. Address: Box 605, The New Republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BEHIND THE FACTS

Telegraph wires crackle; the cables hum; facts explode violently on the front pages of the newspapers.

Better than ever before, the first class dailies give their readers facts. The New Republic, with special correspondents in Europe, in Asia, in Central and South America, in industrial centers in the United States, is also very much interested in facts—and gets some that the dailies miss.

But The New Republic is primarily interested in the ideas behind the facts. Its job is to look back and trace beginnings, to look around and determine relationships, to look ahead and foresee results. In short, The New Republic is a journal of opinion.

If you are the sort of person who wants to know, not only what, but why and what next, you should be reading The New Republic. And if you are one of those people who look at the front page of a newspaper and then turn to the editorial page, you are the person for whom The New Republic is written.

Introductory Offer **13** weeks of The New Republic **$1.00**

The New REPUBLIC
421 West 21st Street
New York City

For the enclosed ONE DOLLAR BILL send me The New Republic for the next 13 weeks.

Name..... City.....

Street..... State.....

9-19-31

Printed by STEINBERG PRESS, INC., 409 Pearl Street, New York, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOT WEATHER READING

Believe it or not, can even include mortgages and moratoriums and yet be stimulating. The September NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW:

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WOMEN?

by LOUISE MAUNSELL FIELD

The paradox of Victorian heroines in the novels of our ultra-modern women.

AVIATION CHASES ITS TAIL

by DONALD ROSE

Reflections on the season's crop of heroic deeds.

A MORGUE OF MORTGAGES

by GERHARD HIRSCHFELD

Faults in our financial institutions have hindered the revival of construction and hence prosperity.

STRICTLY BUSINESS

by PHELPS ADAMS

Tracing the evolution of our attitude toward war debts and thereby throwing clear light on what will happen in the future.

OUR STILL DUBIOUS FOREIGN POLICY

by LEWIS EINSTEIN

A diplomat's view of the gaps in the rest of our foreign policy.

THE FIRE BODY

by ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

A story.

And other articles, fiction and departments.

SPECIAL OFFER: 6 months for $1. Open only to new subscribers.

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW,
9 E. 37th Street, New York City.

For the enclosed One Dollar, send me THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW for six months (Canadian Price, $1.25; Foreign, $1.50).

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

N. R., Aug.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED